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TRAGEDIES

OF

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INTO

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WITH NOTES.

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ÆDIPUS TYRANNUS.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ŒDIPUS<sup>a</sup>.

PRIEST.

CREON.

CHORUS OF AGED THEBANS.

TIRESIAS.

JOCASTA.

MESSENGER.

SERVANT OF LAIUS.

MESSENGER EXTRAORDINARY.

<sup>a</sup> Arrian, ap. Stob. S. 97. 28. hints that both the Œdipi were personated by Polus, a distinguished actor, of whom Gellius makes mention, 7. 5.

# ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS.

## ŒDIPUS.

MY children, youthful brood of Cadmus the ancient, what can be [the meaning of] these sittings ye are hurrying<sup>b</sup> here before me, decorated with supplicatory branches? whilst the city is at the same time full-fraught with incense-offerings, and at the same time with both pæan-hymns and groanings. All which, I thinking it my duty to decline hearing from messengers<sup>c</sup>, my children, have in person come hither; I, Œdipus, titled by all<sup>d</sup> the Illustrious. But, O aged man, say, since it naturally becomes thee to speak on behalf of these, in what mood ye stand affected; by fears, or by earnest wishes; since I would willingly

<sup>b</sup> Θοάζω, like the word by which it is here rendered, is both transitive and intransitive.

<sup>c</sup> "Ἄλλων ὄντων ἀγγέλων is Erfurdt's interpretation; but Elmsley, *unus omnium diligentissimus Attici sermonis scrutator*, makes ἄλλων redundant.

<sup>d</sup> From the position of πᾶσι it might not be improper to translate "the all-illustrious," with a construction like that of v. 40. See also Œd. Col. 1446.

give you every succour; for I were lost to sympathy, not to compassionate a meeting such as this.

PRIEST.

But, O Œdipus, present sovereign of my country, us indeed thou beholdest, of what ages we are who sit as suppliants before thine altars here<sup>e</sup>; some of us not yet of strength to wing our flight afar; others priests weighed down with old age, myself the priest of Jupiter; and others here the chosen of the youths: but the rest of the populace decked with branches, is seated in the market-places, and near both the shrines of Pallas, and at Ismenus' ashes of divination<sup>f</sup>. For the city, even as thou thyself beholdest, is now over-roughly tossing on the surge, and from the abysses of that ensanguined surge is no longer able freely to lift her head; withering in the husks that envelope the fruits of the soil, withering in the pasturing herds of kine, and in the abortive labours of women: whilst therewithal the fire-wielding god, most hated pestilence, has darted on and ravages the city: by whom the house of Cadmus is made empty<sup>g</sup>, but dark Hades rich with wailings deep and loud. Now I and these my sons here are

<sup>e</sup> The altars alluded to were of various deities, placed by individuals before their houses, as patriotism or private gratitude might dictate. See the *Curculio* of Plautus, I. i. 7. *Arist. Wasps*, 875.

<sup>f</sup> "Both the shrines." Minerva had a temple at Thebes in virtue of her name *Onœa*, and another as *Ismenia*, which latter name Apollo also bore, and presided over an altar of burnt sacrifices.

<sup>g</sup> The punctuation in Hermann's last edition (1825) after *κενοῦται* seems to weaken the force of contrast in this passage. It is here translated as if the stop were a comma.



seated petitioners by thy hearth, judging thee not equal with the gods, but of men the first, whether for the common casualties of life, or the interventions of higher powers. Who at least, though a visitor to Cadmus' capital, hast abolished the tribute of the stern chauntress, which we were furnishing: and this too neither acquainted by us with anything further<sup>h</sup>, nor instructed of us: no; by the prompting of god thou art reputed and believed to have righted our condition. Now too, O majesty of Œdipus, owned paramount by all, we implore thee, all prostrate here before thee, to find some help for us, whether by hearing the voice of any god, or from any human source, thou knowest such: since to the experienced I observe even the issues of their counsels to be the most flourishing. Go, best of mortals, reestablish the state, go, look well to it; since at present indeed this our land celebrates thee as its preserver for thy former zeal—but O! may we in no wise remember thy reign in particular for our having both regained our footing and afterwards fallen: no; in unrelapsing strength restore our country. For as with propitious augury thou didst render to us the former lucky service, so in the present instance be equal [to thyself]. Since if in sooth thou wilt govern this our realm, as surely thou dost sway it, it is more noble to sway it with a people, than desolate. For neither tower nor ship is aught, if destitute of men associating therein<sup>i</sup>.

<sup>h</sup> "Further," that is, than the bare fact of the riddle proposed, and the penalty exacted by the Sphinx.

<sup>i</sup> "Ceterum similiter, homines, non muros, esse urbes, dixerat Themisto-

ŒD. My children, objects of my pity, you have come to me with wishes known, yes, not unknown to me; for well am I aware that ye are all diseased, and diseased though ye be, there is not one of you who is equally diseased with me. For your affliction falls on one alone, in his own person, and on none other; while my soul sighs at once both for my state and myself and thee. So that ye awake me not slumbering in sleep at least, but know that I already have shed many tears, have traversed many paths in the wanderings of thought: and that only mode of cure which I had discovered by careful scrutiny, that have I put in execution. For I despatched to the Pythian mansions of Apollo, Creon, the son of Menœceus, my kinsman by marriage, to enquire by what deed or word I might deliver this my city. And the day being already correspondent by calculation to his time, pains me for his fate [as to how he fares], since beyond reasonable expectation he is away a longer than the due period. But whenever he shall have arrived, that instant I were a villain not to perform to the full all that heaven may reveal.

PR. Nay, both thou hast well said, and these too just now signify to me that Creon is walking towards us.

ŒD. Hear, king Apollo, for O that he may have come with some saviour fortune at least, even as he is sparkling of eye.

PR. If one may guess, however, he is welcome; else

cles." *Erfurdt*. This article of political belief was forcibly expressed by Themistocles, it was still more strikingly acted on by Lycurgus; for the former rebuilt the walls of Athens, the latter left Sparta unwall'd.

would he not have been proceeding hither, his head thus amply-wreathed with all-fruitful laurel<sup>j</sup>.

ŒD. Quickly shall we know, for he is within reach of hearing us. Prince, my relation, son of Menœceus, what report from the god comest thou bringing to us?

CREON.

Good: for I assert that even our grievances, should they chance to have their issues aright, might be altogether fortunate<sup>k</sup>.

ŒD. But of what purport is the oracle<sup>l</sup>? For I am neither rashly sanguine, nor yet however prematurely alarmed at thy present speech at least.

CR. If thou choosest to hear while these are by, I am ready to tell thee, or if [thou choosest] to retire within doors.

ŒD. Speak openly to all, for I make more account of the sorrows of these my people than of even mine own life.

CR. I will say what kind of answer I heard from the god. King Phœbus openly enjoins us to expel

<sup>j</sup> The laurel crown, say the commentators, was the privilege of those "quibus lætæ sortes obtigerant." Chremylus in the *Plutus*, however, will hardly allow the "lætæ sortes" to be his lot, though his slave wears the chaplet.

<sup>k</sup> A purposely dark answer, breathing the true Loxian spirit.

<sup>l</sup> GR. ἔστιν δὲ ποῖον τοῦτο; Quid hoc sermonis est? BR. "What mean thy words?" DALE. Ἔπος is emphatically *an oracle*, and moreover the expression τῷ γε νῦν λόγῳ would be a mere repetition, if Brunck's translation were correct. In the same passage the opposition of θράσος to προδείσας gives confirmation to the distinction made between θράσος and θάρσος, audacia and fiducia.

from the country a pollution, as having been bred in this our land, nor to foster what is incurable.

ŒD. By what kind of purification? What is the nature of the evil?

CR. By banishing, or requiting death with death, since the following bloodshed troubles the state<sup>m</sup>.

ŒD. Why of what manner of man does he indicate this fate?

CR. We had once, O king, Laïus as the sovereign of this land, ere thou didst regulate [the helm of] this state.

ŒD. I knew him by hearsay, for I never as yet at least saw him.

CR. This man having perished, Apollo now clearly gives us orders to punish certain his actual assassins.

ŒD. But where on earth are these same? Where shall be discovered this vestige hard to conjecture of an ancient crime?

CR. In this land, he told me. But what is searched for, is to be got at, while that which is unregarded escapes.

ŒD. But is it in the house, or in the field, or in another land, that Laïus encounters this bloody death?

CR. Quitting home, as he told us, on a visit to the

<sup>m</sup> τὸδ' αἶμα χειμάζον πόλιν. Although the translator has not ventured to render this otherwise than Erfurdt, Hermann, and Elmsley have given it, i. e. as an accusative absolute, and with the word τὸδε referring to something subsequent, he has still a doubt whether ἔστι might not be understood, and the passage construed thus: "Since this is a case of bloodshed troubling the city." The answer of Œdipus will then run thus: "How so? for of what manner of man," etc.: but it hardly seems natural that Œdipus should interrupt one who indicated (as is done by τὸδε, according to the critics) his purpose of immediately proceeding to specify the murder.

oracle, he never more came back to that home, as he had been called from it.

CÆD. And was no messenger, nor partaker of his journey, a witness to this, from whom gaining intelligence one might have used it?

CR. No; for they are dead, except one individual, who, having fled in terror, had nought to tell from his knowledge of what he saw, except one fact.

✓ CÆD. Of what nature that fact? for one thing might find means to learn many, could we lay hold of but a slender foundation of hope.

CR. He used to say, that robbers chancing on Laius had slain him, not by the valour of one arm, but with a number of hands.

CÆD. How then would the bandit, had there been no tamperings by bribes from hence, have reached such a pitch of audacity as this.

CR. This was suspected; but amid disasters there came forward no one as the avenger of Laius now no more.

CÆD. But what kind of distress interfering, when the monarchy had thus declined, checked you from sifting out this matter?

CR. The Sphinx, mysterious songstress, compelled us to look to that which was before our steps, having abandoned what was hidden from sight.

CÆD. But from its first cause will I bring it to light again. For right worthily has Phoebus, and worthily hast thou set on foot this present examination in the cause of the deceased: so that deservedly ye will see me also your abettor, avenging at once my land here, and the god. For in behalf, not of my more distant friends, but

myself of myself, shall I disperse this gathered pollution. Since whoever it was that murdered him, he might perhaps wish to take vengeance on me too with like hand. In supporting *his* cause, therefore, I advantage *myself*. But with what speed ye may, my children, do you on your part arise from off your seats, removing these branches of supplication; but let some one else assemble hither the people of Cadmus, since I purpose to take every step. For we will prove ourselves either with heaven's aid prosperous or undone.

PR. My sons, let us arise; since even for the sake of those things our prince of himself announces, came we hither. But may Phœbus, who has sent us these divinations, come with them both our deliverer and in the quality of healer to our sickness.

#### CHORUS.

O sweetly-speaking oracle of Jove, to what import canst thou have come from Pytho stored with gold, to illustrious Thebes? I am prostrated in my timorous spirit, quivering with dismay, O healer, Delian, Pæan, awfully anxious about thee, as to what matter thou wilt bring to pass for me, either at once, or hereafter in the revolving seasons. Tell me, thou progeny of golden hope, imperishable Fame: to me who invoke thee first, daughter of Jove, immortal Minerva, and thy sister, protectress of our soil, Artemis, who is enthroned on her circling chair of fair renown in the market-place, and Apollo, striking his quarry from afar; oh, be ye timely present to me, three several averters of destruction, if ever, in the case of a previous cala-

mity also besetting my country, ye thoroughly exterminated the flame of mischief, now too approach: ye powers, for I suffer incalculable miseries; nay, my whole people to a man is sickening; nor is there amongst us the armour of precaution, wherewith one shall defend himself: for neither do the productions of our celebrated<sup>n</sup> soil thrive, nor in childbed do our women recover from their poignant throes<sup>o</sup>; but one upon another mightest thou see, even as a well-fledged bird, more fiercely than uncontrollable fire<sup>p</sup>, speeding towards the shore of the western god<sup>q</sup>. In the uncounted hosts of whom the city is perishing, and whole generations unpitied are lying without a tear (to their memory) on the plain whose harvest is death; while among them wives and grey-haired mothers withal, some from this,

<sup>n</sup> Brunck says, that one codex reads *κλυτὰ*; but the plain of Bœotia is particularised by ancient writers, and, among others, by Thucydides in his preface, for its fertility.

<sup>o</sup> *ἀνεχούσι*, “bear up with.” All the commentators seem to coincide in accepting Hesychius’s interpretation of *ἰήτος*, as translated.

<sup>p</sup> In the Hecuba of Euripides, the anarchy of a ship’s crew is termed, *κρείσσων πυρός*, in a similar sense to that given in this translation; yet the second interpretation of the scholiast, “too fast for the (funeral) fires though unquenched,” derives plausibility from Thucydides’ account of the *ἀναίσχυντοι θήκαι*, 2. 52.

<sup>q</sup> “Western god.” *Neminem præterea novi qui sic Plutonem vocaverit, πόρεν’ Ἀχέροντος ἀκτὰ παρ’ εὐσκιον* habet Pindarus Pyth. ii. str. 2. Vide et Antig. 806, 7.” *Musgrave*. In the peroration of Lysias’ Oration against Andocides is this passage, “To expiate this pollution,” (the mutilation of the Hermæ,) “the priestesses and priests, turning toward the setting sun, the dwelling of the infernal gods, devoted with curses the sacrilegious wretch, and shook their purple robes, in the manner prescribed by that law which has been transmitted from earliest times.” Mitford, *Hist. of Greece*, c. 22. sect. 2.

some from that quarter, along the rising altar-slope as suppliants, on account of their deplorable afflictions wail out a sad lament. But clear bursts the pæan-anthem, and a sorrow-breathing voice chiming in, Wherefore, O golden daughter of Jove, send Rescue, fair of aspect, and make the pestilent Mars, who now unarmed with brazen shield, (but) environed with shrieks, encounters and scorches me, to turn his back in homeward hurrying flight, an outlaw from my country, either to the vast bower of Amphitrite, or to that inhospitable harbourage the Thracian breakers; for, in fine, if night have spared a relic, on this day fastens. Which (Mars), O thou that wieldest the sovereignty of the fiery lightnings, O Jove our sire, blast by thy thunderbolt. Thine invincible artillery also, O princely lord of light<sup>r</sup>, from the golden twisted horns of thy bow would I gladly celebrate as champions in our aid, and the flame-tipped blazing lights of Diana, wherewith she scours the Lycian mountains: him of the golden mitre, too, I call, surnamed of this our land Bacchus Evius, of aspect flushed with wine, fellow-rambler of the Mænadae, to approach, flaming with thy beamy pine-torch, upon the god unhonoured amongst gods<sup>s</sup>.

<sup>r</sup> The old word *λύκη* or *λύκος*, (whence, probably, the Latin *lux*,) forms *λυκόφως* and *λυκάβας*. The latter word occurring in Apollonius Rhodius, *Argon.* i. 198. first suggested to the translator of this play an idea which he is happy to find sanctioned by Maltby's authority, (v. *λύκειος*,) that even the Sophoclean *λυκοκτόνος* is one, among many other fanciful substitutes, for the true origin of this epithet.

<sup>s</sup> *ἀπότιμος*, Pindar, *Pyth.* 2. 80,

*Γόνον ὑπερφίαλον,*

*Μόνα, καὶ μόνον, οὐτ' ἐν ἀν-*

*δράσι γερασφόρον, οὐτ' ἐν θεῶν νομοῖς.*



CÆD. Thou petitionest but for thy petition, if thou be willing to hear and receive these my words, and to give thy attention to the disease, thou mightest obtain succour and alleviation of thy miseries: words, which I shall utter, a stranger to this tale before us, a stranger to the crime committed. For I by myself could not trace the matter far, unless I had some clue: but now, seeing that I am enrolled among our citizens a citizen of later date, to all you Cadmæans I make proclamation thus: Whatsoever man of you chances to know of Laius son of Labdacus, by what man he fell, him I command to make full confession to me. And whether he fears, as having to divulge from concealment the impeachment himself against himself<sup>t</sup>; let him, seeing he shall suffer nothing else unwelcome, but shall quit the country unharmed; or whether, on the other hand, any one have known another from another land as such, let him not be silent as to the assassin, for his reward I will pay, and gratitude shall accrue to him besides. But if, on the contrary, ye shall be dumb, and any one apprehensive either on his friend's account, or even on his own, shall have disregarded this my warning, you are to hear from me this which I purpose consequently

<sup>t</sup> ὑπεξελών τοῦ πικρήματα, "crimen confitendo diluens." Elms. "Conditum promens." Hermann; who quotes the Electra, 1411. where the scholiast's interpretation is plainer than his own; and Eurip. Hipp. 629. (ed. Monk,) where Monk says, "hunc versum forsan omitti potuisse censuit Valchenaerius;" and where the idea of *draining silently off*, seems as apposite as *conditum promens*, when applied to ὄλβον δωμάτων. In the 4th book of Thucydides, c. 83, the better authorities have ὑπεξελεῖν, for ὑπεξελεῖν, τὰ δεινὰ, which is most aptly rendered "to remove out of the way." The reader must choose between the note and the text, which follows Hermann.

to do. I prohibit any one of this land of which I wield the powers and royalties, from either receiving or accosting, from making a communicant with himself of either vows or sacrifices to the gods, and from apportioning the lavers of holy water to this wretch, whoever he is: but I will that all thrust him from their homes, for that this is the defilement upon us, as the Pythian oracle of the divinity has just now revealed to me. I then am after this manner the ally both of the deity and the mortal who is dead. But I imprecate on the perpetrator, whether he have escaped detection being some single person, or with more, that, like a villain as he is, he may wear slowly out an unhappy existence. But on myself I call down, should he be an inmate in these my halls with my privacy, the very penalties which I have just now invoked on these. But on you I strictly impose the performance of all this, both on my own behalf, and of the god, and of this our land, thus without its fruits and without its god brought to decay. For not even if the matter had not been taken up by the god, ought you in reason to leave it thus unatoned, when the best of men, and your monarch, had perished, but thoroughly to sift it: but now, since it is I who possess the authority which he held before, who possess too his bed, and the same wife to raise up seed; and since a common offspring to his in common would have been of her born, had not issue unhappily failed him, whereas now fate has fallen violently on his head; for these causes I will thus do battle for him, even as it were for mine own father; and will resort to all means in seeking to take the author of his murder to the son of Labdacus, and of Polydorus, and of earlier

Cadmus, and of the ancient Agenor: and for those who fail to perform these orders, I pray the gods to allow to spring neither seed-crop to them from their land, no, nor children from their wives; but that they may be wasted away by their present doom, and by one yet more hateful than this. But to you the other Cadmæans, as many as these designs are acceptable to, may both the friendly power, Justice, and all the gods' weal, be present evermore.

CH. Even as thou hast involved me in a curse; thus, O king, will I speak: for neither was I his slayer, nor have I power to disclose that slayer. But this same question was the part of Phœbus who gave the message to have declared, namely, who on earth has done the deed.

ÆD. ~~Thou hast justly spoken. But to compel gods~~ to that which they shall not have pleased to do, could no man alive have power.

CH. By permission, I would suggest the second step after this which occurs to my thought.

ÆD. Nay, even if there be a third, see thou omit not to give it utterance.

CH. I know that king<sup>a</sup> Tiresias most especially has insight into the same things with king Apollo, from whom one enquiring of these matters, O king, might derive the clearest knowledge of them.

ÆD. But not even this have I managed as a slothful

<sup>a</sup> The expression *ἄναξ* refers here to the functions of king, priest, and prophet, which were united from the earliest times, and which neither the Athenians nor Romans, when they abolished the regal power, dared nominally to separate, but still retained their titular *βασιλεὺς* and *rex*.

work, for I have despatched, at Creon's word, two to fetch him; and long since he moves my wonder by his non-attendance.

CH. Well, certainly the other stories, however, are absurd, and out of date.

ŒD. To what purpose these same? for I scrutinize every report.

CH. He was said to have fallen by some wayfarers.

ŒD. I, too, have heard so; but the witness of this no one has in his eye.

CH. But surely, if he possesses one particle of fear, at least he will not endure hearing such curses as these of thine.

ŒD. Him who can have no horror of the deed, neither will a word overawe.

CH. Yet is there who shall expose him, for those yonder are slow conducting hither the heavenly seer; in whom alone of men is the truth innate.

ŒD. Tiresias, thou who dost contemplate all things, both those which may be taught, and those which are unspeakable, and those which are of heaven, and those that tread our earth; with what a disease our city is familiar, even though thou seest not, thou must still be sensible: whereof we discover thee, O king, the only protector and deliverer. For Phœbus, although thou art not informed of it by the messengers, has sent word in return to us who sent to ask, that release from this our present sickly state alone could come, if, having rightly discovered, we should put to death those who put to death Laïus, or send them into banishment from the land. Do thou, therefore, on thy part, grudging us neither response from augury, nor if thou hast other

way of divination whatever, redeem thyself and the state, redeem me, redeem the whole pollution of the dead<sup>v</sup>. For in thy hands we are; but for a man to do benefit from such means as he may have and can use, is of labours the most glorious.

## TIRESIAS.

✓ Woe, woe, how fearful a thing is wisdom, where it cannot pay its profits to the wise. Alas! for this I having well known completely lost, else had I not come hither.

ŒD. Nay, what is this? how dispirited art thou come to us!

TIR. Dismiss me to my home, for most easily wilt thou endure thy doom and I mine, shouldst thou be prevailed on by me.

ŒD. Thou hast said what is neither lawful nor affectionate to this thy country which nursed thee, in depriving her of this divulgement.

TIR. Why, I observe that neither does thy speech proceed from thee seasonably; I do it, therefore, that I may not suffer the same evil on my part.

CH. Do not, in the name of the gods, if aware of this, be averse [to speak], since we all here, prostrate as suppliants, kneel to thee.

TIR. Because ye are all infatuated: but I——<sup>w</sup>, no,

<sup>v</sup> That is, "all that the death of Laius has polluted."

<sup>w</sup> "But I ——." This is translated after the punctuation of Hermann's edition. In his addenda, however, Elmsley considers Erfurdt to have correctly interpreted the passage, the second *μή* to redound, and the order to be, ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ μήποτε ἐκφάνω (id est, οὐποτε ἐκφανῶ) τὰ σὰ κακά, ὡς ἔν

never ; be it that I may not, by telling mine own, unfold thy miseries.

ŒD. What sayest thou ? though privy to it, wilt thou not give it utterance, but thinkest thou to betray us, and plunge the city in ruin ?

TIR. I will torture neither myself nor thee. Wherefore dost thou fruitlessly probe these matters ? for never mightest thou extract them from me.

ŒD. What, villain ! veriest of villains ! for thou on thy part wouldst enrage the temper even of a stone ; wilt thou never declare it at all, but show thyself thus unsoftened and unsatisfying ?

TIR. Thou hast complained of my ill humour, but thine own that dwells with thee hast thou not discerned\* ; yet blamest thou me.

ŒD. I do ; for who would not be incensed at hearing such words as those, in which thou now settest at nought this city ?

TIR. Why, they will come to pass, even though I suppress them in silence.

ŒD. Oughtest not thou, then, to inform me of at least that which will come to pass ?

*εἶπω τὰ ἐμὰ μαντεύματα.* " Never imagine that I will bring to light thy misfortunes, in order that I may utter my prophecies."

\* Hermann considers that Eustathius is right in attributing to these words an allusion to Jocasta, and says, that the expression *ὁμῶν ναίουσιν* is otherwise useless ; which, however, it would not be, since it contains the very reason which gives Tiresias's remonstrance so much force. The ambiguity, if any ought to be, is well preserved in these lines :

Thou hast reprov'd my warmth, yet little know'st  
What dwells in thine own bosom, though on me  
Thou heap'st reproach.

TIR. I can tell thee no farther ; whereupon, if thou wilt, be exasperate with such whatever rage is most ferocious.

CÆD. Aye, on my soul, and I will at least pass over nothing, so enraged am I, of what I am apprised of. For, know, thou art suspected by me both to have helped engender the deed, and to have done it, in all but killing him with thine hands ; nay, hadst thou possessed sight, even this deed its very self had I asserted to be thine alone.

TIR. Is it even so?—-I charge thee to abide by the proclamation, even that which thou hast promulged, and from this day forth to speak word neither to these here, nor to me ; for that thou art the unhallowed defiler of this land.

CÆD. Hast thou thus shamelessly given vent to these words of thine, and canst thou possibly expect that thou shalt acquit thyself of this ?

TIR. I stand acquitted, for I cherish truth in its strength.

CÆD. At whose hand schooled ? for surely not from thy art.

TIR. At thine ; for thou hast provoked me reluctant to speak.

CÆD. What manner of speech ? speak again, that I may the rather apprehend.

TIR. Understood'st thou not before, or temptest thou my words ?

CÆD. No, not at least to have termed it intelligible ; but say again.

TIR. I say thou art the murderer of the man, whose murderer thou seekest.

ŒD. But in no wise with impunity shalt thou twice at least utter calumnies.

TIR. Shall I tell thee, then, one other thing also, that thou mayst be the more angered?

ŒD. As much at least as thou inclinest, since it will be said in vain.

TIR. I affirm thee to be unconsciously holding the most shameful intercourse with thy dearest friends, and not to see the depth of misery in which thou art.

ŒD. And dost think thou shalt always say these things even exultingly?

TIR. Yes, if at least there be (as there is) any might in truth.

ŒD. Nay, there is, save to thee; but to thee there is not this, since thou art blind both in thine ears and thy mind and thine eyes.

TIR. But thou at any rate art wretched in reproaching me with this, wherewith is there not one of these who will not speedily reproach thee.

ŒD. Thou art fostered by night alone, so that thou couldst never do either me or any other, whoever he be, that looks on the light, a mischief.

TIR. For it is not fated thou shouldst fall, at least by me, since Apollo is sufficient, whose care it is to accomplish all this.

ŒD. Are these the inventions of Creon, or thine own?

TIR. Nay, Creon is no bane to thee, but thyself to thyself.

✓ ŒD. O wealth, and sovereignty, and art surpassing art in this life of constant emulation, how great is the jealousy stored up among you! if at least for the sake



of this my dominion, which the city reposed in my hands, a free gift and not solicited, from this Creon the loyal, my former friend, secretly supplanting me is longing to eject me, having suborned a sorcerer such as this, a vamped up of plots, a wily mountebank, a wretch that hath eyes only for his gains, but as to his art was born blind. For if not, come tell me, wherein art thou a true seer? How didst thou not, when the monster of wild song<sup>y</sup> was here, pronounce some spell of deliverance to these our citizens? And yet her riddle at least was not for the chance-comer to expound, but required divination, which thou plainly exposedst thyself as not possessing either from birds or known from any one of the gods; but I, when I was come, the nothing-knowing *Cedipus*, put her down, having mastered it by judgment, and not having learnt it from birds: I, whom forsooth thou must try to depose, expecting that thou shalt stand next in place near the Creontean throne<sup>z</sup>. To thy cost methinks both thou and he that contrived all this will go exorcising pollutions: nay, hadst thou not

<sup>y</sup> ἡ ῥαψωδὸς κύων. A puzzling title to translate; but the Sphinx was all a puzzle, and would have made a great figure in these days of Egyptian statues and hieroglyphics, particularly as her acted charades were better than her spoken, at least they nonplussed the poor Thebans more, being of that ancient kind which he who receives aright "had need from head to foot well understand." For the translation, if any one have so much of Euripides, or rather Diogenes, in him as to prefer "enigmatical bitch," he may find in the poem of *Christabelle* one of the same breed, and most "enigmatical." vv. 2 et seq.

<sup>z</sup> On the expression τῷ λαβδᾶκι παιδί Brunck has a long note from Eustathius, producing two examples from Homer of these adjectives in *εὐος*, in both of which there seem a certain solemnity and state intended to be expressed, which indeed are more palpable in these instances from Sophocles: τῷ λαβδᾶκου τε παιδί would not have had the same force.

borne an old man's seeming, to thy cost hadst thou known<sup>a</sup> what manner of things they be thou purposest.

CH. To our conjecture, both this man's words and thine, O Œdipus, appear to have been uttered in passion. But there is want not of such as they, but how we shall best expedite the oracles of the god, to consider this.

TIR. Even though thou art a king, the right of an equal reply at any rate must be equalized to us, for of this I too am master. For in no wise do I hold life as servant to thee, but to Loxias, so that I shall not by and by be entered under Creon as patron. But I tell thee, inasmuch as thou hast taunted me with being blind also: thou actually hast thy sight, and seest not in what evil thou art, nor where thou art dwelling, nor with whom thou art consorting. Knowest thou now from whom thou art? Thou art even unaware that thou art the enemy of thine own buried kindred, and of those on earth above. And thee a fearful-footed<sup>b</sup> curse with double stroke both from thy mother and thy father shall one day chase from this land, thee seeing now indeed rightly but then darkness. But with thine outcry what manner of haven, of Cithæron, shall not speedily

<sup>a</sup> Brunck renders "damno tuo cognoscere, quam male sentias." This is not satisfactory, the force of the particle *περ* being entirely lost, unless it be thought implied by "sentias." Since Œdipus appears confident of the nature of Tiresias' intentions, may we translate "thou hadst known as the sufferer just what thou knowest as the designer," and consider it a threat of banishment; or does *οἷα περ* mean *qualia cunque*? Elmsley prints them together, *οἷα περ*; Hermann separately.

<sup>b</sup> *δεινόπους*.

And long upon my troubled ear

Rang his dark courser's hoofs of fear.—GIAOUR.

be in unison, when thou shalt have become sensible of the marriage into which, though void of harbourage, thou hast in thine halls steered thy course, happening on a fair voyage-time? But thou dost not feel conscious of a whole host of other miseries, which shall level thee with thy real self and with thy children. Now then foully asperse both Creon and my words, for there lives not the mortal who shall ever wear himself away more direfully than thou.

OED. And is all this then bearable to hear from this thing? Wilt not away to thy death? Wilt not instantly? Wilt thou not turn thy back upon these halls, and get thee away again in haste?

TIR. Nay, I for my part had not come, hadst thou not bidden me hither.

OED. I did, because I was by no means aware that thou wouldst utter folly, else had I taken my time at least in fetching thee to my dwelling.

TIR. Such as we are, we are, to thy thinking, fools, but to the parents who begat thee, wise.

OED. What parents? tarry: nay, who of mankind is my parent?

TIR. This day shall give thee thy birth and thy destruction.

OED. How perplexed and obscure to excess dost thou speak every thing?

TIR. Art not thou then by nature the aptest at discovering these?

OED. Revile me, and welcome, in those things in which thou wilt find me great.

TIR. Yet is it nevertheless this very chance which has been thy ruin.

ŒD. Nay, but if I have rescued this our city, I care not.

TIR. Now then will I depart, and do thou, slave, conduct me.

ŒD. Well, let him conduct thee, since while here thou troublest and hinderest us, and, wert thou gone, thou couldst not annoy us more.

TIR. I will be gone when I have spoken that for which I came, not from awe of thy presence<sup>c</sup>. For there is no mean whereby thou shalt destroy me. \* But I tell thee: this very man, whom all this while thou art searching out with menaces and proclamations touching Laius' murder, this man is here, a foreign settler here by report, but by and by shall he be manifested a Theban born, nor shall he be pleased at the occurrence. For blind from one who saw, and poor instead of wealthy, over a strange land shall he be a wayfarer, assaying his way with a staff: but with his own children shall he be detected abiding, at once their brother and their sire, and of the woman of whom he was born both son and husband, and of his father both corival and assassin. And these things, going in doors, reason over with thyself; and if thou detect me to have falsified, say in that case that I have no skill in divination.

#### CHORUS.

Who is he whom the prophet-spoken Delphic rock denounced as having wrought with murderous hands the most nefarious of nefarious deeds? Time were it

<sup>c</sup> Hermann understands by *πρόσωπος* audacity; but as it is used with *τόλμη* in a subsequent passage, the translator has followed Brunck.

for him to employ in flight a foot more vigorous than coursers swift as the storm; for the offspring of Jove all armed with fire and lightnings is springing upon him, and together are following the dread inevitable fates. For a voice hath glanced forth, but now appearing from the snowy Parnassus, that every one must track the undiscovered criminal. For under some wild wood is he straying, along caverns and crags, like a bull<sup>d</sup>, with miserable foot a miserable widower: keeping at bay the prophecies sprung from earth's middle: while they ever lively are flitting round him. Fearfully, however, fearfully does the sage augur trouble me, neither assenting nor denying; nay, I am at a loss what to say. But I flutter on hopes, seeing neither in prospect nor in retrospect; for what feud lay between either the Labdacidæ or the son of Polybus, I for my part never learnt either heretofore, nor in the present case have I yet from any one with whose test I attack the popular high character of Cædipus, as avenger of the Labdacidæ in that mysterious murder. Yet Jupiter and Apollo however are omniscient, and skilled in the affairs of mortals; but among men, that a soothsayer is of more account than I, there are no infallible means of deciding; yet a man might surpass wisdom by wisdom: but never would I for my part, until I saw the story in a true light, agree with those who condemn him. The winged maid came once publicly, and he was then seen to be sage, and

<sup>d</sup> "Like a bull." See Virgil's *Georgic*, iii. 219—236. The expressions ἀπονοσφίζων, περιποτάται, etc. seem allusions to the oestrus. And the epithet χηρεύων, which might apply so well to the bull, derives a tremendous force from the contrast of the murderer's actual condition.

upon trial the city's welcome friend; wherefore in my sentiments he shall never be cast as guilty of a crime.

CREON.

Men and citizens, having learnt that Œdipus the king in grievous terms impeaches me, I come before you resolved not to brook it. For if in these the distresses of the present time he considers himself to have suffered ought at my hands, at least by word or deed tending to his injury, truly I have no hankering after a long-enduring life while I undergo this report. For the penalty of this calumny upon me tends to no simple evil, but to one of the first magnitude, if I am henceforth to be branded as a traitor in the city, a traitor before thee and my friends.

CH. Yet surely this said reproach came, as it might be, forced out by resentment rather than by the cool judgment of the mind.

CR. But by what did it appear that, persuaded by my machinations, the prophet speaks his words falsely?

CH. This was indeed averred, but I know not with what meaning.

CR. But was this same accusation alleged against me with eyes and mind set aright?

CH. I know not, for I have no eyes for what my masters do. But the man himself is now sallying forth from the palace.

ŒDIPUS.

Ho, fellow! how camest thou hither? hast thou such a front of impudence that thou art come to my very roof, being palpably the assassin of this man, and as

confessedly the robber of my royalty? Pray tell me, in heaven's name, what cowardice or idiocy having remarked in me hast thou plotted to do this? Was it that I should not detect this work of thine, creeping on me by stealth, and when I had learnt should not protect myself against it? Why is not this thine enterprise a silly one, without either numbers or friends to be hunting empire, which by numbers and by wealth is to be achieved?

CR. Knowest thou what to do? In answer to what has been said listen to an equal statement, and then be thyself the arbiter when informed.

ÆD. Thou art shrewd of tongue, but I am dull at learning of thee; for I have found thee ill-disposed and irksome to me.

CR. This very point now first hear from me as I shall state it.

ÆD. This very point now see thou tell me not, how thou art not a villain.

CR. Truly, if thou thinkest wilfulness to be any gain when separate from understanding, thou thinkest not wisely.

ÆD. Truly, if thou thinkest that ill treating a kinsman thou shalt not undergo the penalty, thou thinkest not wisely.

CR. I agree with thee, that this is spoken with justice; but inform me of the grievance, what it may be that thou professest to have suffered.

ÆD. Didst thou persuade or not persuade me, that it behoved me to send some one for the holy man of prophecy?

CR. Aye, and am even yet constant to my counsel.

ŒD. Well, how long time may it be now, then, since Laius——

CR. Did what manner of deed? for I conceive thee not.

ŒD. Mysteriously disappeared by a fatal assault.

CR. Long and ancient periods might be reckoned up.

ŒD. Was, then, this same diviner at that time in the practice of his calling?

CR. At least he was as sage and as much respected.

ŒD. Well, made he any mention of me then at that said time?

CR. Certainly not, in no place, at least, where I was a bystander.

ŒD. But held ye no inquisition for the deceased?

CR. We commissioned one; nay, how should we not? and heard nothing.

ŒD. How was it, then, that at that time this sage of yours revealed not these things?

CR. I know not; for in matters on which I have no understanding I prefer being silent.

ŒD. Yet this much at least thou knowest, and wouldst state if honest of purpose.

CR. Of what sort is this thing? for if I know it, at least I will not deny it.

ŒD. It is that unless he had conspired with thee<sup>e</sup>, he never could have said that the destruction of Laius was my doing.

CR. Whether he says this or not, thou knowest best;

<sup>e</sup> "Οθ' οὐνεκα. Thus in the old English, the ballad of the field mouse:

Who for because her livelihood was thin,

Would needs go seek her townish sister's house.



but I claim the right of ascertaining from thee just the same things which thou hast now from me also.

OED. Ascertain them; for certainly I shall not be detected a murderer.

CR. What sayest thou, then? art thou married to my own sister?

OED. There is no denial of that thou questionest.

CR. And hast thou the same sovereignty with her, swaying an equal share of territory?

OED. Whatever be her pleasure, she obtains every thing from me.

CR. Am not I then the third on a par with you two?

OED. Why 'tis even in this in fact thou showest thee a false friend.

CR. Not so, if at least thou wouldst reason with thyself, as I do. But reflect on this first, if thou think that any would choose for himself authority with its apprehensions, rather than to sleep fearless, if at least he will have the same powers. Neither, then, am I myself of a nature to covet the being a monarch rather than the acting as a monarch, nor any other who has a sense of prudence; for now I procure every thing from thee without fear, but were I king myself, I should do many things even against my wishes. How then is monarchy naturally more pleasing to me to possess, than rule and puissance without pain? I do not yet happen to be so much deceived, as to wish for aught else than what is profitable as well as honourable. Now am I welcome to all, now every one salutes me, now they who have a suit to thee summon me out; for their success is centred altogether in me. How then should I, having abandoned this place, grasp at that other? A well-intentioned spirit could not become wicked. But

I am neither by nature a warm admirer of this same sentiment, nor should I ever venture on it with another to effect it: and as a test of this, in the first place, go to Delphi, and enquire if I have fairly reported to thee what was prophesied: thus much more; if thou detect me to have complotted aught in common with the sooth-sayer, take and put me to death, not by a single suffrage, but by a double one, both mine and thine; but hold me not guilty on an isolated and uncertain opinion. For it is not just to consider, on slight grounds, either the wicked good, or the good wicked. For to cast away a virtuous friend, I call as bad as to cast away one's own life, which one loves best. But in time thou shalt discern all this, without fail, since time alone developes the honest man; but a traitor thou mightest discover even in one day.

CH. Commendably hath he spoken to one cautious of falling, O prince; for they who are hasty to judge are insecure.

ŒD. When any one takes quick steps in covert machinations, it needs me counteract him in counsel quickly; but if, keeping quiet, I wait for him, his practices will have been matured already, but my cause already failed in.

CR. Well then, what is thine aim? To eject me from the land?

ŒD. By no means: I would have thy death, not exile.

CR. When thou shalt first have shown the nature of thy grudge to me.

ŒD. Speakest thou as one who will obey neither command nor agreement?

CR. Yes; for I see thou art not in thy right mind.

ŒD. For my own interest at least.

CR. But thou oughtest as much for mine too.

ŒD. But thou art a born traitor.

CR. But what an thou understandest nothing?

ŒD. Yet still one must be ruled.

CR. Surely not by a bad ruler at least.

ŒD. O city, city!

CR. I too have a part in the city, and not thou only.

CH. Princes, desist; nay, in good time, for you see  
I Jocasta advancing from the palace, in concert with  
whom you are bound amicably to settle your quarrel  
now pending.

**JOCASTA.**

Why, infatuated, have ye raised up this unadvised  
strife of tongue, nor blush ye, when our land is thus  
diseased, at stirring up private mischiefs? Wilt not both  
thou get thee home, and thou, Creon, to thy dwelling,  
and not raise a nothing of an offence to magnitude?

CR. Sister, Œdipus, thy husband, thinks proper to  
do me foul wrong, having limited choice to two evils,  
either to banish me from my father's land, or to take  
and slay me.

ŒD. I confess it; for I have detected him, lady,  
in malpractices against my person with wicked craft.

CR. Now may I never prosper, but perish accursed,  
if I have done aught to thee of what thou accusest me  
of doing.

Jo. Oh! in the gods' name, Œdipus, be persuaded  
to this: most especially, indeed, in respect to this ad-  
junction of the gods; secondly, to both me and these  
who are at thy side.

CH. Be prevailed on, consentingly and sensibly, my liege, I implore thee.

ŒD. What wilt thou, then, I shall concede to thee?

CH. To respect him who neither ere now was imprudent, and now is mighty in virtue of his oath.

ŒD. Dost know, then, what thou wishest?

CH. I do know.

ŒD. Explain, then, what thou hast to say.

CH. That thou beware of bringing into impeachment and disgrace thy friend, who underlies thy suspicion, with an uncertain rumour at least.

ŒD. Know now full well, that when thou seek~~est~~ this, thou art seeking death or banishment from this land for me.

CH. No, by the god, champion of all the gods, the sun, since I wish I may die without god, without a friend, the direst of all deaths, whatever it be, if I have this design; but my withering land wears out the spirit of hapless me, especially if these afflictions, I mean which arise from you two, shall attach to the previous afflictions.

ŒD. Then let him begone; aye, if it be my destiny utterly to fall a victim, or be thrust out by violence, dishonoured from this country; for 'tis thy piteous appeal, not his, that I compassionate: but he, wherever he shall be, shall be loathed.

CR. Full of loathing, indeed, thou plainly showest thyself in yielding; but intractable, when thou shalt have exceeded in thy passion. Such tempers, however, are justly the most painful to themselves to bear with.

ŒD. Wilt thou not leave me alone, and get thee forth?

CR. I will be gone, having happened on thee, indeed, unacquainted with me; but in the eyes of these the same as heretofore.

CH. Lady, why delayest thou to convey this man within the house?

JO. I will, when I have learnt at least what may have been the mischance.

CH. An unproved presumption came of certain words: even the unjust taunt is cutting.

JO. From both of them?

CH. Even so.

JO. And what was the saying?

CH. Enough, enough to me at least it seems, when the land is previously distressed, that it rest there where it left off.

ŒD. Seest thou to what thou, a man of upright intention, art come, by lowering and deadening my spirit?

CH. O prince, I have said not once alone, but know that I should show myself beside my senses, incapacitated from regaining those senses, were I to secede from thee, who hast piloted right steadily down the stream mine own dear land, when rocking about in troubles; and now too, be safe convoy to it, if thou mayest.

JO. In the gods' name inform me also, O king, from what circumstance on earth thou hast conceived so great wrath as this.

ŒD. I will tell thee; for I hold thee, lady, in more respect than these: it is from Creon; that he has plotted such devices against me.

JO. Speak, if thou wilt plainly state the cause of quarrel, charging it on him.

ŒD. He says that I am the murderer of Laius.

JO. Of his own privity, or having learnt it from other?

ŒD. Why, by having sent me a knavish soothsayer, however; for as to himself, at least, he exculpates his speech entirely<sup>f</sup>.

JO. Do thou now, leaving thine own matter alone, as touching the things thou speakest of, give ear to me, and learn for thy comfort, how that there is no mortal essence endowed with the prophetic art. But I will develope to thee concise evidence of this. For long ago came an oracle to Laius, I will not assert from Phœbus himself, however, but from his ministers, that his doom shall come for him to fall by a son who should be begotten of me and him. And him, indeed, at least as the story goes, do foreign robbers murder on a time, at the junction of three carriage-ways. But on the birth of the child there intervened not three days before he, having tied the joints of its feet together, cast it away by others' hands upon an untrodden mountain. And therein Apollo brought to pass neither that it should be the slayer of its father, nor that Laius, the disaster which he then dreaded, should die by his son's hand. Such fates did the prophetic declarations predetermine, of which take thou no heed. For whatever the god investigates as necessary, will he in person easily make appear.

<sup>f</sup> i. e. from having accused me. It appears strange that so many commentators should have missed the true sense of a passage so strongly marked by the particles *μὲν οὖν*, and the *γὰρ* in the next clause. Œdipus is positive (*οὖν*) of Tiresias being merely Creon's mouthpiece, though Creon himself had vindicated his own language. See Hermann's and Erfurdt's notes.

ŒD. What distraction of soul and perturbation of feelings at this moment possesses me, having heard thee, lady.

JO. By what manner of solicitude altered in mind sayest thou this?

ŒD. I thought I heard this from thee, that Laius was slaughtered near three high-ways.

JO. Yes; for these things were rumoured, nor have they yet ceased to be.

ŒD. And where is this said spot where this catastrophe occurred?

JO. Phocis the land is called: but a separate road leads to the same point from Delphi and from Daulia.

ŒD. And what is the time that has elapsed to these events?

JO. Some short time previous to thy coming forward as ruler of this land, were these rumours published to the city.

ŒD. O Jupiter, what hast thou purposed to do by me?

JO. But what, O Œdipus, is this monster of thy thought?

ŒD. Question me not yet<sup>ε</sup>. But of Laius, tell me what personal appearance he had, and that<sup>h</sup> at what era of his prime.

<sup>ε</sup> "Not yet." Porson says, ad Hec. 1260. (ed. Pors.) that μήπω is used for μήποτε, which Erfurdt quotes on this place, although totally inapplicable, and quotes moreover without the most essential part, the "λιότης quædam" of μήπω for μήποτε; which omission might lead one to suppose that Porson thought the two words equivalent, and the particle πω to have two senses.

<sup>h</sup> "And that." Erfurdt's note on this place is truly admirable, when contrasted with the opinions of those learned men who, by dubbing those words *noirs faineants* which they cannot express, would conceal their own

JO. Of lofty port, just now whitening to down the hoary honours of his head : but he was not very unlike thine own form.

ŒD. Woe me unhappy ! It seems I have, without knowing it, even now forced myself prematurely into horrid curses.

JO. How sayest thou ? verily I shudder as I glance at thee, O king.

ŒD. Fearfully am I despondent, lest the prophet saw too well : but thou wilt the surer demonstrate it if thou wilt be explicit on one more point.

JO. Indeed, indeed I shrink from it ; yet what thou shalt ask, if aware, I will tell.

ŒD. Was he journeying thinly attended, or with a train of many armed retainers, as one of a chieftain's rank should ?

JO. They were five altogether ; and among them was a herald : but a single chariot conveyed Laius.

ŒD. O, O ! all this is now full clear. Who on earth was he who told this same narrative to you, lady ?

JO. A certain domestic, who in fact was the only one who returned safely escaped.

ŒD. And does he happen to be now at hand in the palace ?

JO. O no ! for from the time when he returned thence, and saw both thee installed into the sovereignty, and Laius dead, he petitioned me, grasping my very hand, to send him into the country and to the pastures of the

laziness or the poverty of modern languages. "Participia ἔχων, λαβών, et alia nunquam sic ponuntur, ut nihil plane significant, semperque imaginibus rerum ad summam illam, cui Græcorum nobilissima gens per omnia studebat, perfectionem exprimendis inserviunt."



flocks, that he might be most completely removed from sight of this city. And I sent him: for he was worthy, considering him as but a slave, to obtain even a higher favour than this.

ŒD. How then may he return to us speedily?

JO. It is feasible: but wherefore seekest thou this?

ŒD. For myself I fear, lady, lest over much have been said by me, for which cause I wish to see him.

JO. Nay, he shall come. But surely I also am worthy to learn, at least, what circumstances are irksome to thee, O king.

ŒD. And thou surely must by no means be disappointed of this, when I have now arrived at such a pitch of expectancy<sup>1</sup>. For to whom could I speak who would be of more account even than thou, when implicated in such a fate as this? I had for my father Polybus of Corinth, for my mother, Merope of Doris: and I was esteemed chiefest in rank of the citizens of Corinth, before an accident befel me such as I shall tell, worthy indeed of wonder, but unworthy nevertheless of the interest I took in it. For at a banquet a man overcharged with wine, brands me over his cups with being a supposititious son of my father. And I, deeply displeased, with much ado restrained me for that day; but on the next I visited my mother and my father, and strictly questioned them: but they were highly offended for the affront with him who gave vent to the assertion. And I began to be soothed indeed with their conduct; but yet this innuendo was always galling me, for it had sunk

<sup>1</sup> Erfurdt, referring to v. 829, thinks ἐλπὶς correctly translated by *hope* here. The other seems the most natural sequel to Œdipus' words immediately preceding.

deep in my mind. But unknown to my mother and father I go on a journey to Delphi. And Phœbus dismissed me in disgrace, indeed, as to the matters for which I came; but other fortunes, wretched, and horrible, and deplorable, he was but too ready to tell: that it was my doom to commit incest with my mother, and that I should bring to light a progeny mankind should not endure to behold, and that I should be the murderer of the father who begot me. And I on hearing this, from that time forth measuring out the site of the land of Corinth by the stars, began my flight from it to where I might never witness the scandals of those evil prophecies about me accomplished. But in my travel I reach those very spots on which thou sayest that this same monarch met his death. And to thee, lady, will I divulge the truth: when I wending on my way<sup>k</sup> was close

ἰ Προφάνη λέγων. *Aperte prædixit.* Brunck. But both the sense of the passage and the force of προφάνητε in the first chorus are in favour of the other rendering.

<sup>k</sup> This is the first of four passages which Hermann in his preface to Erfurdt's edition has specially noticed. Elmsley in his preface has these words "Ἡ pro ἦν, eram, quater reposui. Ἦν aliquoties ante vocalem legitur apud Euripidem, ut in Hippol. 1012. Alc. 658. Iph. Aul. 944. Ion. 280. Quamquam hæc omnia corrupta esse suspicor. Sic etiam ter Aristophanes, sed in Pluto, novissima omnium fabula, v. 29. 695. 823. Nihil tale apud Sophoclem reperitur. Vid. Œd. Tyr. 801. 1123. 1389. 1393. Œd. Col. 768. 973. 1366. Trach. 87. 414. Aj. 1377. Phil. 1219. Fl. 1023." From this remark of our critic Hermann has taken occasion to dilate at some length on the propriety of limiting the alteration proposed, and brings forward the following points for consideration: 1st. That if the tragic writers never, and Aristophanes only in his latest written play, used ἦν, it is strange that Plato, many of whose writings are subsequent to the Plutus, should have adhered to the obsolete form. That to the above lines of Euripides no other suspicion of a corrupt text can attach than the identical ἦ in question; and that there-

upon this triple road, there did both a herald, and a man mounted on a chariot with young steeds, even as thou describest, meet me; and both the guide and the old man himself were for driving me by force off the road. So I in passion strike him who was turning me off, the charioteer. And the old man when he sees this, having watched my passing by, struck me from the car with a doubled goad a descending blow on the middle of the head. Aye, and he paid a penalty not equivalent, I trow, but hastily struck by a staff from this hand, he is instantly rolled out of the chariot prostrate, but I slay the whole of them. But if Læius and this same stranger have any near connection, who is a more pitiable object than I, even I? What man could there be more abhorred of the gods? to whom it is permitted that none of strangers or natives should admit him within their doors; that none should even speak to him, but thrust him from their dwellings: and this it was no other than I, that fastened on myself even these curses. Nay the couch of him who is deceased do I pollute by my hands, those hands by which he fell. Am I not by nature a villain? am I not totally impure? if I must needs flee the country, and ~~having fled~~ am to be permitted neither to behold mine

fore it were safer to have determined that tragic and comic writers used  $\eta\nu$ , in order to avoid the hiatus before a vowel. 2nd. That if  $\xi\alpha$  or  $\eta\alpha$  and  $\xi\omicron\nu$  be found in Homer as imperfects of  $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$ , the old grammarians considered  $\eta\eta\nu$  no less so, (Il. o. 80.): that the  $\xi\alpha$  of Herodotus, the imperfect, seems different from Homer's  $\xi\alpha$ , which in one instance, (Od.  $\xi$ . 351.) must be taken as an aorist, and may in all he has cited. 3rd. That the Attics may, as in other cases of a double imperfect, have taken  $\eta$ , though formed from the undoubted imperfect  $\xi\alpha$ , as an aorist. For the examples adduced in support of this opinion, see Hermann's preface. In this passage he retains  $\eta\nu$ , admitting either to be correct.

own, nor to set foot on my native soil ; or I am doomed to be yoked in wedlock with my mother, and to kill outright my father Polybus, who reared, who begot me. And would not any one, pronouncing all this to be the work of a ruthless dæmon upon me, be right in his words? Then O may I never, may I never, thou spotless majesty of heaven, see this day, but may I be gone from among mankind into darkness ere that I view such a taint of misery come upon me.

CH. To us, O king, these tidings are alarming: until however thou hast ascertained more from the eyewitness, cherish hope.

ŒD. Yes, certainly, so much hope at least I have, as merely to abide the coming of the man, the herdsman.

JO. But when he has made his appearance, what reassurance canst thou have?

ŒD. I will inform thee. For should he be found to be in the same story with thee, I for my part may have escaped the woe.

JO. But what manner of word of more than common interest heardest thou from me?

ŒD. Thou toldest me of his denouncing certain robbers as having slain the king: if therefore he shall report the same number still, I was not his slayer, for one at least could not be the same with many. But if he shall mention one man single-handed, plainly is this very deed thereupon leaning towards me.

JO. Nay, be assured that the tale was so published at least, and he cannot again nullify this at any rate; for the whole city, and not only I, heard these tidings. But if, after all, he should in any point swerve from his former account, never, O prince, shall he show that

Laius' murder at least was duly consistent, whom I ween Apollo Loxias declared must perish by a son of mine. And yet, whoever slew him, that did not ever the ill-starred babe, but himself perished long before. So that I never again for the sake of divination at least would turn mine eyes either this way or that.

**ŒD.** Well dost thou determine : but yet send one to convey hither the hind, nor neglect this.

**JO.** I will hasten to despatch one; but let us go in doors : for I would do nought which might be displeasing to thee.

**CHORUS.**

O that it were my daily fate to support the all-sainted purity of every word and action, whereof are propounded laws of state sublime, engendered within the firmament of heaven, whose only father is Olympus; nor did perishable nature of man give them being, no, nor shall oblivion ever drown them in sleep. Great is the divinity in these, nor groweth old. Insolence engenders the tyrant, Insolence, if idly she have been over-glutted with much that is neither seasonable nor serviceable, having surmounted the topmost precipice, dashes onward into ruin, where she must avail herself of unavailing foot. But the rival energy that is wholesome for the state I implore the deity never to unnerve; never will I cease to take god for my patron. But if any walk presumptuously in deed or word, unawed of justice, nor reverencing the seats of the powers above, may evil doom overtake him in reward of his fatal wantonness; unless he shall gain his gains honestly, and refrain himself from all unhallowed things, or, playing the fool, shall grasp at

what is sacred from the touch. In this state of things, what man will ever again glory in repulsing from his soul the darts of passion? for if practices such as these be had in honour, why need I lead the chorus? Never again will I make pilgrimage to the hallowed centre of earth as worshipper, nor to the shrine at Abæ, no nor the Olympian, unless these matters shall turn out congruous (plainly enough) to be pointed at by the finger of all mankind. But, O sovereign Jove, if indeed thou art rightly styled ruler of the universe, be it not unregarded by thee and thine ever-undying empire. For already are they overthrowing the ancient prophecies of Læius which fall into decay, and nowhere is Apollo conspicuous in worship, but all that is divine is going to ruin.

Jo.<sup>1</sup> Princes of the land, the design has suggested itself to me of repairing a suppliant to the temples of the gods, having taken in my hands these chaplets and incense-offerings. For Œdipus raises his feelings to too high excitement by griefs of every variety, nor, as should

<sup>1</sup> Jocasta here, contrasted with the Jocastæ of the following scenes, seems an instance of that *ὁμαλῶς ἀνώμαλος* of Aristotle, which Bossu so well illustrated by the regular irregularities of "th' inconstant moon." That Jocasta is *ἀνώμαλος* in the play is evident: but is she so *ὁμαλῶς*? The mother who in three days from the birth of her firstborn could abandon him to his fate without an effort to save him; the queen-consort who could so soon forget the husband of her youth, that in such time as it took to finish a journey from Delphi to Thebes, hear and solve a riddle, she could wed an utter stranger; such a woman might assuredly, without violation of historic truth, be represented as changing with the breath of every rumour. If any thing were wanting to make the character more natural, it is supplied in her clear-sightedness with regard to her husband, who, she says, *ἔστι τοῦ λέγοντος*, quite unconscious of this being her own chief weakness.

a man of understanding, conjectures what is new by what is old; but is the speaker's dupe, if he but speak of horrors. Since then by advising I make none the more progress, to thee, O Lycæan Apollo, seeing thou art nearest at hand, am I come a petitioner with these rites of prayer, that thou mayest furnish us with some holy remedy, since now we are all quailing to see him, as pilot of the vessel, horror-stricken.

## MESSENGER.

Could I learn from you, strangers, where is the abode of the monarch Cœdipus? but chiefly of himself, tell me if ye know where he is.

CH. This is his mansion, and himself is within, stranger; but this lady is the mother of his children.

MES. But may she be prosperous herself, and ever consort with the prosperous, for that she is his true and proper wife.

JO. Nay, and be thou on thy part also the same, O stranger, since thou deservest it for thy courteous accost: but make known in quest of what thou hast come, and what desirous to impart.

MES. Good to thy house and husband, lady.

JO. Of what nature this same good? and from whence arrived?

MES. From Corinth; but at the tale which I shall divulge thou mightst perhaps be gratified; nay, how shouldst thou not? yet haply mightst thou be sorry.

JO. But what is it? what sort of twofold force does it thus possess?

MES. The inhabitants of the Isthmian land will set him up for their king, as was there reported.

Jo. But what? is not the aged Polybus still on the throne?

MES. No truly, since death prisons him in the grave.

Jo. How hast thou said? is Polybus deceased, old man?

MES. If I speak not the truth, I confess me worthy of death.

Jo. Ho, handmaiden, wilt thou not be gone and tell this with all speed to thy lord? Predictions of the gods, where are ye? This very man Œdipus long ago in alarm lest he should murder, went into banishment, and now, behold! he has perished by course of nature, not by my husband.

#### ŒDIPUS.

O mine own dearest consort-queen Jocasta, wherefore hast thou sent for me hither out of the palace here?

Jo. Listen to this man, and as thou hearest, mark to what are come the solemn predictions of the god.

ŒD. But who can this man be, and what has he to tell me?

Jo. From Corinth, to bring thee news that thy father Polybus is no more, but is dead.

ŒD. What sayest thou, stranger? Do thou thyself become my informant.

MES. If I must first deliver me of this fact clearly, be assured that he is dead and gone<sup>m</sup>.

ŒD. By treachery, or the encounter of disease?

<sup>m</sup> Not with ὁδόν understood after θανάσιμον, but the latter agreeing with βεβηκόρα, according to Erfurdt.



MES. A trifling bend of the scale sends to their last sleep aged frames.

ŒD. By sicknesses, it seems, the poor sufferer wasted away.

MES. And surely, also, by having lived commensurately with so long a time.

ŒD. Alas! alas! why then, my queen, should any one regard the Delphic hearth of divination, or the birds that scream above our heads, under whose predestination I was fated to slay my own father? But he is dead and buried deep down in earth, while I here before you am guiltless of handling weapon against him, unless in any degree he pined away from regret of me, but so he might have been done to death by my means. The present oracles then Polybus has swept off with him utterly worthless, and lies in Hades.

JO. Did not I now forewarn thee of this long ago?

ŒD. Thou didst say it; but I was led away by my fear.

JO. See thou no longer give one of them place in thy mind now.

ŒD. And how must I not shrink from a mother's bed?

JO<sup>n</sup>. But why should man fear, whom the decrees of chance control, while there is no certain fore-

<sup>n</sup> These reflections on the part of the king and queen are the more ungrateful, in that Apollo had just sent them, without demur, instructions for the removal of the plague. The whole demeanour of these impious personages, who

—————“Lifted up so high  
Disdain'd subjection, and thought one step higher  
Would set them highest;”

and their encouragement of each other in irreligion, reminds one forcibly of

sight of aught? 'Twere best to live at random, e'en as one could. But have thou no fear of the bridal alliance with thy mother; for many among mankind have ere now, and that in dreams, done incest with a mother; but to whomsoever this reckons as nothing, he bears his life the easiest.

ŒD. Fairly had all this been stated by thee, had my mother happened not to have been alive; but now, since she does live, there is positive necessity, even though thou speakest fairly, for me to recoil.

JO. And yet the burial of thy father is at least a great help to sight in this.

ŒD. Great, I admit; but I have dread of the survivor.

MES. But on what woman's account is it even that ye are afraid?

ŒD. Of Merope, old man, with whom Polybus used to live.

MES. But what is there of her which makes to your apprehension?

ŒD. A dreadful prediction sent from heaven, stranger.

MES. Is it to be spoken, or is it not permitted that another know it?

ŒD. Most certainly it is. For Apollo foretold once that it was my destiny to be mine own mother's paramour, and with mine own hands to shed my father's blood. For which cause has Corinth this long while,

Vathek and Nouronihar, when "with haughty and determined gait" they descended the staircase of Istakhar to the hall of Eblis. In both princes curiosity is the prime agent; and in both "Υβρις, ἀκρότατον εἰστανάβας ἐς ἀπότομον, ὥρουσεν ἐς ἀνάγκαν."

been dwelt far away from by me, prosperously indeed ; but still it is most sweet, to look one's parents in the face.

MES. Why, was it in dread of this thou wert expatriated from thence?

ŒD. And from desire also to avoid being my father's murderer, old man.

MES. Why then have I not released thee from this thy fear, O king, since in fact I came thy wellwisher?

ŒD. Do, and I swear thou shouldst have a right worthy recompense of me.

MES. Aye, and I swear I came especially for this, that, on thy restoration to thy home, I might in some way be advantaged.

ŒD. But never will I come into the presence of my parents, at least.

MES. My son, thou showest full well that thou knowest not what thou doest.

ŒD. How, old man? In the name of the gods, instruct me.

MES. If for these causes thou shunnest to return home.

ŒD. It is at least from alarm lest Phoebus prove in the issue true towards me.

MES. Is it lest thou shouldst contract contamination from thy parents?

ŒD. This very thing, old man, even this for ever affrights me.

MES. Knowest thou not, then, that thou tremblest with no just cause?

ŒD. Nay, how should I not, at least if I was the child of these progenitors?

MES. Even because Polybus was in no wise of kin to thee.

ŒD. How hast thou said? why, was not Polybus my father?

MES. Not a whit more than he thou seest before thee, but as much.

ŒD. And how comes one's father to be on a par with no one?

MES. But neither he begat thee, nor I.

ŒD. But in consideration of what, then, did he allow me a son's title?

MES. Know, it was from having received thee formerly a present from my hands.

ŒD. And then did he, though from another's hand, thus dearly love me?

MES. Yes, for his former childless state induced him.

ŒD. But wert thou my purchaser or parent<sup>p</sup>, and gavest me to him?

MES. Having found thee in the bushy forest dells of Cithæron.

ŒD. But for what purpose wert thou a wayfarer in those said regions?

\* This, according to Erfurdt, is not to be understood of the meanness or nothingness of the herdsman, but, as he paraphrases it, "*Qui dici possunt genuisse aliquem, quorum nemo genuit?*" See v. 838, and the note following.

<sup>p</sup> "Or parent." Hermann remarks, that it might seem wonderful for Œdipus to ask this, when the messenger had just told him that he was not his father any more than Polybus; but that we must consider Œdipus as attending to the intention of the old man, and not his words. Hence, too, when Œdipus says *πῶς ὁ φύσας ἐξ ἑσού τῃ μηδενί*; he does not allude slightly to the old man, but merely to himself having no father.

MES. I used to be superintendent there of the mountain flocks.

ŒD. How! wert thou a shepherd, and a wanderer on a menial drudgery?

MES. Aye, but thy saviour, remember, at that time.

ŒD. But what pain supporting comest thou on me in my misery?

MES. The ligaments of thine own feet might attest that.

ŒD. Woe is me! why harrowest thou up this ancient curse?

MES. I unbind thee having the soles of thy feet bored through.

ŒD. Ah, dire indignity, indeed, did I bring off with me from my swaddling clothes<sup>9</sup>.

MES. Insomuch that thou wert named from this misfortune as thou art.

ŒD. Say, in heaven's name, by my father's or my mother's deed?

MES. I know not; but he who gave thee understands this better than I.

ŒD. Why, didst thou receive me of another, nor find me thyself?

MES. I found thee not, but 'tis another shepherd who transferred thee to me.

ŒD. Who was this? knowest thou to designate him in words?

<sup>9</sup> Brunck translates *σπάργανα* by *crepundia*, child's baubles or badges, not supplying *ἐκ*, which *ἀνελόμην* however seems to require. Perhaps there might have been in *σπάργανον* a sense not given by lexicographers, from the verb *σπαργάω*, *tumeo*.

MES. He was named, I am sure, one of the servants of Laius.

ŒD. Of him who was monarch of this land long ago?

MES. Certainly. Of that very man was this a herdsman.

ŒD. And is he yet alive, that I may see him?

MES. You, the natives of this country, surely should best know.

ŒD. Is there any of you bystanders who knows this herdsman to whom he alludes, having seen him in short either in the country or here? Inform me, since it is the moment for this to be investigated.

CH. I, indeed, deem him none other than the servant from the country, whom even before this thou soughtest diligently to see. But, however, Jocasta here could certify this the best.

ŒD. Lady, knowest thou him whom but now we were earnest should come, and of whom this person speaks?

JO. (wildly) But who, who is he of whom he spake? Heed it not: nay, what has been uttered, do not wish so much as to remember for no good.

ŒD. This cannot be, that I having obtained such a clue as this, shall not elucidate my descent.

JO. By the gods I beg thee, do not, if at least thou care for thine own life, investigate this: 'tis enough that I be ill at ease.

ŒD. Courage; for never, not even were I proved by three descents a trebly-servile slave, wilt thou be exposed as base.

JO. Yet obey me, I conjure thee: do not this.

ŒD. I could not obey thee in not clearly sifting this out.

JO. And yet with kind intentions at least I advise thee for the best.

ŒD. Why now it is this very best that long since aggrieves me.

JO. Miserable man, I would thou mightest never know who thou art!

Œ. Will some one go and bring hither to me the herdsman? But for her, leave her to enjoy her noble lineage.

JO. Woe, woe, unhappy man! for this only have I to say to thee, but other word hereafter—none.

CH. For what possible cause can the queen be gone, O Œdipus, having rushed away under the impulse of a wild anguish? I dread lest from this very silence there burst forth mischief.

Œ. Burst forth whatever will: but I shall choose to discover my origin, even if it be humble. But she perhaps, since for a woman she has a high spirit, is scandalized at this my meanness of extraction. But I, ranking myself the child of that Chance which gives me her blessing, shall not feel dishonour. For of her, as of a mother, was I born<sup>r</sup>, and the months my kindred; have ordained me humble and exalted. But having been such by nature, I could never turn out to be another, that I should not search out my pedigree.

<sup>r</sup> Hermann understands by συγγενεῖς μῆνες, *menses qui mecum fuerunt*, i. e. *vita mea*. The translation above given is susceptible of the same meaning.

CHORUS<sup>s</sup>.

If I am indeed prescient, and sagacious in discernment, thou, O Cithæron, I swear by Olympus, shalt not, by to-morrow's full of the moon, be without experience of our extolling thee at least as both of one country with Œdipus, and as his nurse, and as his mother, nor of being visited by us in choric dances, as performing acceptable service to my princes. But O that this, O Healer Apollo, might be agreeable to thee. Who, O son, what daughter<sup>t</sup> of the immortals, I wonder, was thy mother, visited haply as a paramour by Pan the mountaineer, or, since 'tis thou, by Apollo? for to him the champaign heads are all endeared: or did the reigning prince of Cyllene, or the Bacchanalian god, whose home is on the topmost hills, receive thee a foundling from some one of the Heliconian nymphs, with whom he is oftenest frolicking.

<sup>s</sup> The chorus here changes its tone from that of the preceding ode very suddenly, and more for the advantage of the reader, who thereby gains a beautiful snatch of a Greek allegro, than of its own character for consistency. Still these fond ancestral reveries in honour of a *patriot king*, awaken in us the sense of contrast by touches almost Miltonic: themselves a fairy dream, they shape us out a fearful reality, "which substance may be called, yet shadow seems," and, like the funeral oration of Pericles, are ever linked and haunted with an opposing spirit, a mysterious *double* of what meets the ear.

<sup>t</sup> Hermann's alteration of the punctuation here has restored *θυγάτηρ* to her rightful inheritance, by omitting the note of interrogation after *μακραιώνων*. If his note leave anything unexplained in full, it is the force of *ὅς σε γέ*, which probably infers Apollo father of Œdipus, because the latter was so apt in solving hard sayings.



ŒD. If I too have any business to conjecture, old man, who have never yet had an interview with him, I think I see that very herdsman, whom all this while we are seeking. For in his extreme old age he corresponds as the contemporary of this man here; and besides, I recognise his conductors as my own domestics. But in acquaintance with him thou very possibly mayest have the advantage of me, from having seen the herdsman before.

CH. Why yes, be sure I do; for I have known him, since he belonged to Laius, trusty in his degree of grazier, if ever another were.

ŒD. Thee first I interrogate, the Corinthian stranger, is this the man thou meanest?

MES. This very man whom thou seest.

ŒD. Ho, thou old man, look hither towards me, and answer to all that I shall ask thee. Wert thou ever in Laius' service?

## SERVANT.

I was<sup>u</sup>, a slave, not purchased, but reared in his house.

ŒD. Concerned in what avocation, or manner of life?

SER. For the best part of my life I was in attendance on flocks.

ŒD. In what places principally a resident?

SER. It would be Cithæron, and it would be the adjacent districts.

ŒD. Well then, knowest thou this man, having made acquaintance with him anywhere in these parts?

<sup>u</sup> Hermann reading *ἦ* here, says "et hic quidem aperta est aoristi significatio, neque id *eram* quisquam, sed *fui* vertet." See note on v. 793.

SER. As doing what thing? of what manner of man even art thou speaking?

ŒD. This man, who is before thee: hast thou ever before now had dealings with him?

SER. Not at least that I could readily affirm it from recollection.

MES. And no wonder that at least, my lord: but I will distinctly remind him of forgotten times; for I am sure he knows when in the region of Cithæron, he being with two flocks, I with one, I was the neighbour of this very man from spring to early autumn, three entire periods of six months each. And when now it was winter, I used on my part to drive my charge into sheepcotes, and he to the pens of Laius. Say I any of these things or say I it not as it was done?

SER. Thou speakest the truth, though in sooth from a distant time.

MES. Come, now tell me; rememberest thou to have given me any child at that time, that I might rear it as a nursling to myself?

SER. But what means this? wherefore enquirest thou in these words?

MES. This, my comrade, is that very one who was then an infant.

SER. Will not perdition seize thee? wilt not hold thy peace?

ŒD. Hold, old man, chastise not this man, since thine own words have more need of a chastiser than his.

SER. But in what, my most gracious liege, am I in fault?

ŒD. In not declaring the child of whom this man asks thee.

SER. Because he speaks knowing nothing, but labours in vain.

ŒD. Thou indeed wilt not speak as a favour, but to thy cost thou shalt speak<sup>v</sup>.

SER. Do not, I pray, for the love of the gods, ill use me an old man.

ŒD. Will not some one with all speed tie this fellow's hands behind him?

SER. Wretched man, for what purpose? what wouldst thou know more?

ŒD. Gavest thou to this man the boy of whom he questions thee?

SER. I did; but O that I had died on that day.

ŒD. Nay, to this thou wilt come, at least if thou speak not the truth.

SER. Much more certain is my destruction, if I shall speak.

ŒD. This fellow, it seems, is driving at delay.

SER. Not I, truly; but I said long ago that I had given the boy.

<sup>v</sup> The altercation with Creon, and this scene with the shepherds, from the snarling repartee which runs through them, are supposed by Twining to be among the parts of our poet which gave occasion to the ridiculous idea of a comic writer in Diogenes Laertius, (4. 20.) that Sophocles had a dog to help him write tragedies: *κύων τις ἐδόκει συμποιεῖν Μολοττικός*. That eminent translator seems to forget that anger levels most men, and that of kings especially "the wrath is great;" he forgets that every passage he has produced from *Sophocles* to this point, is the expression of angry feeling; he forgets the simplicity of the times of which he is writing. But when he quotes Longinus, to prove that in these places the spirit of Sophocles *σβέννυται ἀλόγως, καὶ πίπτει ἀνυχέσταια*: putting aside that as to Longinus's meaning he begs the question, let him show that Longinus ever wrote naturally for ten lines together, ere he takes that really great critic's dictum on the expression of heated feelings.

ŒD. Whence having got him? of thine own house, or of any other?

SER. Surely I gave not my own away, but I received him from some one.

ŒD. From whom among these citizens, and from a house of what degree?

SER. Do not, for the gods' sake, do not, my sovereign, enquire farther.

ŒD. Thou diest, if I shall ask thee this again.

SER. It was then one of Laius' offspring.

ŒD. A slave, or one by birth of kin to him?

SER. Woe is me! I am surely on the verge of speaking the very horror.

ŒD. And I surely of hearing: yet must it be heard.

SER. Why then it was said to be actually his own child: but the lady within could best inform thee how this stands.

ŒD. Why, is she the donor of this child to thee?

SER. Even so, sire.

ŒD. For what purpose?

SER. That I might make away with him.

ŒD. The own mother, hard-hearted<sup>w</sup>?

SER. In horror, however, of evil prophecies.

ŒD. Of what import?

SER. There was a story, that he should be his parents' murderer.

ŒD. How camest thou then to resign him to this elder?

<sup>w</sup> Erfurdt has a note here from Ruhnken's Preface to Scheller's *Lexicon*, which seems uncalled for. Τλήμι means "to have the heart" to do any thing; and τλήμων here takes this signification much better, surely, than that of *perdita* or *miser*.

SER. Through compassion, my liege, as supposing that he would carry him away to another land, whence he himself was; but he reserved him for the direst misery: for if thou art he whom this man declares thee to be, know thou art born to a cursed destiny.

CÆD. Oh! Oh! All must have its issue plainly. O light, may I look on thee now for the last time: I, that have been shown the son of those of whom I should not have been, holding commerce with those with whom it became me not, and having killed whom it was my duty never.

CHORUS.

O generations of mortals, how as nothing do I reckon you in this life. For where, where is the man that achieves more of happiness, than barely so much as to fancy he has it, and so fancying to fall away from it? Even thine example having before me, thy destiny, even thine, O hapless Cædipus, I term nothing of mortal fortunes happy: that destiny which, with archery triumphant to excess, achieved the prize of all-blissful prosperity, O Jove! having done to death the maiden prophetess with forked talons, nay, a bulwark against slaughters didst thou stand up to my country, whence also thou art titled my sovereign, and hast been supremely dignified with honour, lording it in Thebes the mighty. But now to hear of, who is more miserable? who in sorrows, who in cruel disasters more familiar with reverse of condition? Oh glorious majesty of Cædipus, to whom one and the same ample haven was enough for son and father as a bridegroom to run into: how ever, how ever were thy father's furrows enabled to endure thee in silence so long, unfortunate? Time

the all-seeing detected thee reluctant; justice long since sentences the marriageless marriage, begetting and begotten. Oh! son of Laius, would, would that I had never seen thee. For I mourn with passing sorrow from loudly-plaintive lips. Yet to tell the truth, by thy bounty have I drawn my breath again, and closed mine eyes in repose.

MESSENGER EXTRAORDINARY.

O ye, ever respected the most highly of this land, what deeds shall ye hear, what deeds shall ye witness, how heavy a grief shall ye have to bear, if yet from a feeling of kindred ye are concerned for the house of Labdacus! For, I believe, neither Ister nor Phasis, could lave with water of purification this roof before you of all which it conceals: while other ills will forthwith show themselves to the light, ills voluntary, and not unintended. But of mischiefs, those are the most afflicting which show themselves self-incurred.

CH. Nay, even what we knew before wants nothing of being deeply deplorable; but what hast thou to tell in addition to those?

M. E. The speediest of tales both to tell and to hear: the most noble Jocasta is no more.

CH. Most unhappy woman! By what earthly means?

M. E. Herself by her own hand. But of the action the most painful part is spared us, since the eyewitness is not ours; but yet, as far at least as the memory of them resides in me, thou shalt hear the sufferings of that lost princess. For when, instinct with fury, she passed by within the portal, she went straight to her

bridal bed, tearing her hair with both her hands alike; and having, as soon as she was within, violently closed the doors on the inside, she cries on Laius, now long since dead, bearing in memory that ancient issue by whose hands he was himself to die, and leave the mother to his own, a procreatress of wretched children. But she shrieked aloud over the couch where she had become, unfortunate, the mother of a double progeny, husbands by husband, children by children. And how after this she perished I have no farther knowledge; for Œdipus with outcries broke in, for whom it was impossible to us to look at her fate to its end; but we turned our eyes on him roving around. For he begins wildly rushing, beseeching us to furnish him with a weapon, and tell him where to reach “the wife yet no wife, his mother with her common womb for himself and his children.” To him in his phrenzy some unearthly power discovers this, for it was no man of all of us who were standing by: but shouting fearfully, as with some guide to lead him, he sprung in against the double doors, and from their very deepest fastenings he wrenched the hollow staples, and falls in upon the apartment; where we then looked in upon his wife suspended, entangled in twisted nooses. But he, when he sees her, with horrible bellowsings, poor wretch, loosens the hanging knot; but when the ill-fated corpse was laid on the ground, the sequel was awful to behold: for having torn off from her the gold-embossed clasps\*

\* Perhaps this was an attempt of the poet to reconcile his fair-armed countrywomen to long sleeves, they having lost the privilege of the *περόναι* by their inhuman conduct towards the sole survivor of the disastrous Ægietan expedition. See Herod. v. 87, on which place Larcher quotes an old

of her vestments, wherewith she used to adorn herself, he lifted them and smote the balls of his own eyes, uttering words of this sort, “that ’twas because they had discerned for him neither what mischiefs he was suffering, nor what he was doing; but darkly should they see, for the time to come, those whom he ought never to have seen, nor should they recognize those whom he so longed to recognize. Venting curses such as these full often, and not once only<sup>y</sup> did he wound them forcing up his eyelids. But together the bloody eyeballs began to drench his cheeks, nor emitted mere drops of humid gore, but all at once, a black hail-shower of blood-gouts was shed. These are miseries that broke forth of two, not of him alone, but the consorted miseries of a husband and a wife. For their happiness of a long date before, ’twas hitherto deserving of the name; but now, on this very day, lamentation, ruin, death, dishonour, of whatsoever ill whatever name there be, not one is wanting.

CH. But in what pause of calamity is the sufferer now?

M. E. He is shouting for some one to open the barriers, and expose to all the race of Cadmus the slayer

scholiast, to prove that the Lacedæmonians adopted this dress with clasps, in order to make their women masculine, and the Athenians the Ionian with a view to the opposite effect. As the Argive ladies wore large clasps on this same event taking place, ’tis to be hoped they did not worship Juno in vain.

<sup>y</sup> Hermann joins the words *πολλάκις τε κόρυς ἔπαξ* with *ἰφθυμῶν*, and says of Elmsley’s punctuation that it gives a meaning “justo crudelius.” The imperfect *ἤρασσε*, however, favours the old way of rendering. Potter translates as Hermann.



of his father, of his mother the—uttering unholy things, things not for me to speak; purposing seemingly to make himself an outcast from the land, nor any longer to tarry in his home accursed, as he cursed himself. Yet still he wants strength at least, and some one for his guide; since his disease is greater than he can bear. Nay, he will show thee so himself. For these fastenings of the gates are being opened, and speedily shalt thou behold a spectacle of such a sort as even an enemy must pity.

CH. Oh, disaster fearful to mankind to behold! Oh most fearful of all that I have ever yet encountered! What phrenzy, sad sufferer, beset thee? What demon is it that with mightier than the mightiest bound, hath sprung to wield thy unblest fate? Woe, woe, unfortunate! But I cannot so much as look on thee, anxious as I am to question much, much to learn, and much to see, with such shuddering horror dost thou thrill me.

ŒD. Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh, alas, alas, wretch that I am! whither on earth am I miserable carried. Where is flitting this voice which I hear thus hurriedly? Oh, my fate, to what issue wert thou speeding?

CH. To one of horror, not fit for hearing, nor for beholding.

ŒD. O cloud of my darkness, abominable, falling upon me unspeakable, in that thou art alike unconquerable, and all-prosperous to my bane. Ah me! Ah me! again and again, Ah me! How hath sunk deep within me hand in hand at once the maddening sting of these goads, and the memory of my woes!

CH. And surely it is no wonder, in afflictions great

as these, that thou hast a double sorrow, and bearest double ills.

ŒD. O my friend, thou as mine adherent art still constant, for still dost thou submit to interest thee for me the blind. Alas! alas! for thou escapest me not, but well do I know thee, darkened though I be, at least thy voice.

CH. O thou of dreadful deeds, how hadst thou the heart thus to mangle thine eyes? What higher power prompted thee to it?

ŒD. Apollo was he, Apollo, O my friends, that brought to pass these my wretched, these my wretched sufferings. But no one wilfully pierced them, but hapless I. For what need had I of sight, I, to whom when seeing there was nought sweet to look on?

CH. This was so, even as thou sayest.

ŒD. What then, I pray, have I, object of sight, of love, of accost, that I could hear any longer with pleasure, my friends? Bear me away from the place with all speed, bear me away, my friends, the monstrous destruction, the most accursed, and, if ever there were such, most god-detested of human kind.

CH. O lamentable alike in thy feeling and thy fate, how have I wished that I at least had never known thee!

ŒD. Perish he, whosoever he be, that took me from the barbarous chain that pastured on my feet, and rescued and preserved me from a violent death, earning a thankless return; for had I died then, I had not been so great a sorrow to my friends nor myself.

CH. This would have been to my wish also.

ŒD. Aye, then I had not come the slayer of my

father at least, nor been titled by mankind the bridegroom of those of whom I sprung. But now am I a godless being, child of unholy parents, allied to those from whom I wretched drew my birth. But if there be in kind one evil among evils paramount, this to his share hath Œdipus.

CH. I know not how to say that thou hast well advised; for thou wert better to live no longer than live in blindness.

ŒD. That all this hath not been best wrought, thus tutor me not, nor counsel me longer. For I know not with what manner of eyes beholding, I could have looked my father in the face when I went down to Hades, no, nor my hapless mother, to both of whom deeds have been done by me that hanging is too good for. But forsooth the sight of my children was to be coveted by me to see, springing as they sprung. No, to my eyes never: nor citadel, nor tower, nor sacred images of gods, whereof I the all-unhappy, noblest by birth of any one at least in Thebes, have bereaved mine own self, myself enjoining all to thrust out the impious, the man branded of heaven as polluted<sup>2</sup>. And could I, having exposed such a blot on the race of Laius in my person, ever look on these with unshrinking eyes? No, never, surely! Nay, had there been yet means of stoppage of the fountain of hearing through my ears, I would not have refrained from blocking up my miserable body, that I might have been both sightless and devoid of hearing<sup>3</sup>: for to have one's feeling

<sup>2</sup> Hermann's punctuation has been followed here in joining καὶ γένους τοῦ Λαίου to the next line.

<sup>3</sup> "Hic etsi imperfectum recte se habet, ut essem cæcus et surdus, tamen

abiding beyond reach of one's misfortunes were sweet. Alas, Cithæron, wherefore harbouredst thou me? wherefore having taken me in didst thou not forthwith kill me, that I had never shown mankind the lineage whence I sprang<sup>b</sup>? O Polybus and Corinth, and ancient halls, reputed my ancestors', what a goodly outside indeed with festering sores within have ye reared me? For now am I discovered vile, and of the vile. O ye three roads, and thou concealed dell, and oaken copse, and narrow outlet of three ways, which drank mine own blood from my father, shed by mine own hands, do ye remember me how that I—what deeds having done to you, then came hither, and again what deeds I perpetrated? O bridals, bridals, ye have begotten us, and having begotten, again ye ought to light the selfsame seed, and display fathers, brothers, sons, blood all of one tribe, brides, wives and mothers, and all the deeds that are most infamous among mankind. But, for it is not fitting to utter what neither is it fitting to do, with all speed, in heaven's name, hide me somewhere far away, or slay me, or set me adrift on the sea, where never again ye shall behold me. Come,

etiam aoristo locus est, ut factus essem cæcus et surdus, verbo ἦ idem quod ἐγενόμην significante. Herm. Pref. see note on v. 793.

<sup>b</sup> Hermann, reading ἦν, observes that here, if anywhere, an aorist might be thought needful, to express the sense ὥς ἔδειξα μήποτε ἔνθεν ἐγεννήθην. But though ἦ without the participle would stand for ἐγεννήθην, with it ἦ will not, because γεγώς implies time present, and thus ἦ γεγώς would be unde natus fuisset, a proper expression of one once, but no longer, alive: εἰμὶ γεγώς then standing for the present, ἦν γεγώς becomes from a pluperfect an imperfect; and if by the laws of the language ὥς δείξω ἔνθεν εἰμὶ γεγώς, when changed by a person speaking of a past event, would have required ὥς ἔδειξα ἔνθεν ἦν γεγώς, then is the latter form correct here. See note on v. 793.

deign to touch a wretch forlorn. Be prevailed on, fear not: for evils such as mine no mortal but I is liable to bear.

CH. But for what thou requestest at an apt moment comes Creon here, to act or to advise, since he is left sole protector of the realm in thy room.

ŒD. Woe is me! In what words then shall we address him? What trust shall there in reason be shown to me by him? For in the former transactions have I been discovered altogether base towards him.

CREON.

Not as a scoffer, Œdipus, have I come, nor to reproach thee with any of the former wrongs. But do ye, if ye no longer blush before the race of man, at all events respect more the fire of the royal sun that feeds creation, than to exhibit a pollution such as this thus uncovered, which neither earth, nor rain of heaven, nor light will put up with. But as speedily as possible convey him to his home; for for those of one family alone to see and hear the miseries of a relative, is most fitting in the eye of heaven.

ŒD. For the gods' sake, since thou hast forced me from my expectation by coming the noblest of men as thou art, to me the vilest, concede one thing to me, for I will speak for thy interest and not mine.

CR. And to obtain what demand art thou thus urgent with me?

ŒD. Cast me out from this land with what haste thou mayest, where I shall be found by no earthly being to be spoken with.

CR. I had done it, of this be satisfied, had I not first

of all been anxious to learn from the divinity what was to be done.

ŒD. But surely his whole prophetic answer openly ordered to put to death the parricide, the impious, myself.

CR. So this was said; but still in the emergency wherein we are placed, 'twere better to learn what is to be done.

ŒD. Will ye then thus enquire on behalf of a creature utterly fallen?

CR. Yes; for even thou surely<sup>c</sup> mightest now give credit to the god.

ŒD. To thee then do I solemnly give charge, and will exhort thee too; of her within the house make such sepulture as thou choosest, for duly wilt thou perform this on behalf of thine own at least<sup>d</sup>. But me, never let this, the city of my fathers, condescend to admit a living inhabitant; no, suffer me to abide in the mountains, where is that very Cithæron surnamed mine, which both my father and mother allotted to me yet living as my proper tomb, that I may die by their counsel, who were indeed my destroyers. And yet thus much at least I know, that neither disease nor any other chance shall be my downfall; for never had I been saved in the hour of death, unless for some dreadful evil. But for my fate, let it go which way soever it

<sup>c</sup> *τῶν*, scil. *τοῖ ἀν.* See v. 1446 (ed. Herm.) and Eurip. Med. v. 1011. Porson.

<sup>d</sup> Jocasta being his sister. The confidence reposed by Œdipus, in one who was afterwards to appear as the infringer of these most sacred rights, and that towards Œdipus' son and his own nephew, is introduced with the poet's usual refinement of art.

will; but for my children, on the males I would not, Creon, thou shouldest concern thyself more; they are men, so that they never can feel a scarcity of sustenance wherever they shall chance to be: but on my hapless and pitiable girls, before whom was never my table laid without food, wanting my own presence, but of all that I touched were they two ever the partakers: for whom do thou interest thee for my sake; and above all, suffer me to feel them with mine hands, and pour a last lament over their misfortunes. Do it, O prince, do it, O thou thyself of pure lineage and noble. Surely if I touched them with these hands I should fancy I held them, even as when I had my sight. What shall I say? Tell me, in the name of the gods, do I not surely hear my darlings crying? And has Creon in compassion sent me the best beloved of my children? Am I right?

CR. Thou art right; for I am he that supplied thee with these babes, having known the yet lively delight which from old time possessed thee in them.

ŒD. Then all happiness to thee, and for this their coming may thy tutelary power protect thee better than me. My children, where can ye be? draw near hither, come to these my fraternal hands, which have thus served the once bright eyes of the author of your being for you to see; of me, my children, who without sight, without question of it, was proved your father by that source from whence myself had been raised. And for you I weep, for I have no power to behold you, in imagining the relics of your bitter life, with what treatment at men's hands ye are doomed to live it out. For to what social meetings of the citizens will ye come; nay, to what festivals, whence ye will not betake yourselves

home all in tears in place of enjoyment from the scene<sup>e</sup>? But when at length ye shall have come to marriageable years, who will be he? who will rashly risk, my children, to incur such scandals as will be the death-curses to those at once my parents and yours? For what horror is wanting? your father murdered his father; committed incest with that mother whose seed he was himself, and from the selfsame source when he was born, begat himself you. In such sort will ye be reviled: and then who will espouse you? There is not a man, my children; but too plainly is it your destiny to pine to death barren and unwedded. But since, O son of Menœceus, thou art left sole father to these twain, for we their natural parents are both fallen victims to destruction, do not thou look on and see them, thy kindred, beggars, husbandless, wanderers, nor make them sharers in my woes; but feel for them, seeing them as thou dost at their tender years destitute of every thing, except as far as thy part goes. Accord this, O noble sir, pledging me with thine hand. But to you, my children, if ye had already understanding, I would have given much advice; but now be this mine orison for you, that ye may ever live where it is for your interest to live, and may meet with a fate more desirable than that of the father who begot you.

<sup>e</sup> If Musgrave's references to Æschylus' *Choephoræ*, vv. 450 and 719 (Ed. Blom.) be correct, and they are approved by Abreschius and Blomfield, the passage cannot stand as the former edition, following Brunck, has it: viz. "from whence ye will not return lamented rather than the spectacle exhibited;" because *κεκλαυμέναι* in neither of those passages has a passive sense, and is by Blomfield translated *lachrymis perfusus*.



CR. Enough, whither do thy tears carry thee ; but go within doors.

ŒD. You must be obeyed, though it be no pleasing order.

CR. Why, all things are becoming in their season.

ŒD. Know you then on what conditions I will go ?

CR. Thou shalt tell me, and hearing I shall then know.

ŒD. That thou wilt send me into exile from this land.

CR. Thou askest me what is the god's to give.

ŒD. But to the gods at least I come most odious.

CR. Wherefore be sure thou shalt be quickly gratified.

ŒD. Sayest thou so then ?

CR. Yes, for what I mean not I am not wont idly to say.

ŒD. Away with me then from this spot now.

CR. Proceed then, and let go thy children.

ŒD. By no means take these at least from me.

CR. Be not wilful to have thy way in every thing, for that wherein thou hadst thy will conducted not to thy welfare in life.

CH. O inhabitants of Thebe my country, behold, this Œdipus, who solved the famous enigma, and was the most exalted of mankind, whom where was the citizen who envied<sup>f</sup> not, nor looked with jealous eye upon his fortunes, into how vast a stormy sea of tremendous mi-

<sup>f</sup> Erfurdt has a long and excellent note on the word ἐπιβλέπων, which he shows to answer exactly the Latin " invidens." Hermann's reading has been followed for the rest.

sery he hath come! Then, mortal as thou art, looking out for a sight of that day, the last<sup>s</sup>, call no man happy, ere he shall have crossed the limitary line of life, the sufferer of nought painful.

<sup>s</sup> "The first dark day of nothingness,  
The last of danger and distress,"

says lord Byron, and so said (in part at least) Solon before him. But Aristotle, who was not a man to adopt hypothesis for fact, whether supported by poet or philosopher, disputing the first axiom in toto, brings the second into considerable doubt. Eth. 1.

**ŒDIPUS COLONEUS.**

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ŒDIPUS.

ANTIGONE.

CITIZEN OF COLONUS.

CHORUS OF ATTIC ELDERS.

ISMENE.

THESEUS.

CREON.

POLYNICES.

MESSANGER.

## ŒDIPUS COLONEUS.

### ŒDIPUS.

**CHILD** of a blind old man, Antigone, to what regions are we come, or city of what people? who will welcome Œdipus the wanderer for the present day with scantiest alms, begging but little, yet obtaining even less than that little, and that sufficient for me? For resignation my sufferings, and time so long my familiar, and thirdly my native nobleness lessons me. But, my daughter, if thou observest any sitting-place, either by the common haunts of men, or by the groves of the deities, place me and seat me there, that we may enquire where, after all, we are. For we are come strangers, to learn of citizens, and perform that which we shall have heard.

### ANTIGONE.

My woe-worn father, Œdipus, there are towers, which impale<sup>a</sup> a city, to judge by mine eye, at some dis-

<sup>a</sup> στέγουσιν. Reisigius translates this *occulunt*, Hermann *continent*, adding "quod qui ita dictum putant, ut tueri urbem turres significantur, non ita absurdi sunt; præsertim quum vix dubitari possit, quin arx Athenarum sit intelligenda. Certe Æschylus sic Sept. ad Thebas 803. dixisse videtur

tance. But this spot here is consecrated, as one may certainly conclude, all-blooming with the bay, the olive, the vine, while everywhere within it are winged nightingales in flocks singing sweetly: where bend thou thy limbs upon this unpolished stone, for thou hast travelled onward a long way for an old man.

ŒD. Seat me then, and take care of the blind.

ANT. If but for time's sake I am not now to learn this.

ŒD. Canst thou now instruct me where we have halted?

ANT. That it is Athens at any rate I know, but the spot I do not.

ŒD. Why, this<sup>b</sup> at least every wayfarer told us.

ANT. But shall I go anywhither and learn what place it is?

ŒD. Yes, my child, that is to say, if it be habitable.

ANT. Nay, it is actually inhabited. But I think there is no need, for I see this man here close to us.

ŒD. What, walking hitherward and quick in motion?

ANT. Yes, indeed, and now present: and whatever occurs to thee appropriate to say, speak it, since here is the man.

*στέγει δὲ πύργος.* From the appearance of the Acropolis it might be translated "crown:" yet perhaps Reisigius is right, for Colonus is north of Athens; and up to the time of Theseus the greater part of the city was built on the rock and to the south of it, as proved, says Thucydides, by the site of the most ancient temples at Athens.

<sup>b</sup> "Why, this." Whether we look to the general arrangement of these short dialogues, or to the more important point of propriety in the characters, we shall be equally convinced that this peevish rejoinder is rightly assigned to Œdipus.

ŒD. Friend, hearing from this female, who uses sight both on her own behalf and mine, that thou art come an informant opportune for us to tell us that about which we are in the dark——

## COLONEAN.

Ere now thou make further question, retire from this thy resting place; for thou occupiest a spot whereon it is not pious to set foot.

ŒD. But what is the spot? to which of the gods is it dedicated?

COL. It is not to be touched nor dwelt in: for the awful goddesses possess it, daughters of Earth and Darkness.

ŒD. Whose august name might I, hearing it, worship in prayer?

COL. The all-seeing Eumenidæ the people here at least would call them; but other names are in other places in esteem.

ŒD. But O that they would but kindly receive their suppliant—then may I no more remove from my seat on this their soil.

COL. Nay, what is this?

ŒD. The watchword of my destiny.

COL. But I too am not bold enough without the city's warrant to dislodge thee, at least ere I shall communicate to them what I do<sup>c</sup>.

ŒD. Now for the love of heaven, stranger, deny me not in scorn, a wanderer such as this, the boon I ask of thee, to tell me.

<sup>c</sup> *ῥί δῖαν* is Hermann's reading, after Reisigius, which makes the meaning much less obvious.

COL. Specify it, and thou shalt not find thyself repulsed in scorn by me at least.

ŒD. But what place is this then, into which we have proceeded?

COL. Thou shalt hear and be acquaint with the whole amount of that which I know. This region is all hallowed: its master<sup>d</sup> is the majesty of Neptune; there too is the fire-wielding divinity, the Titan Prometheus: but for the place on which thou steppest, it is titled the brazen-paved causeway of this land, defence of Athens: but the neighbouring lands claim proudly this the knight Colonus as their chieftain, and all bear his name in common being thus designated. Such is this account for thee, stranger, not renowned<sup>e</sup> in story, but rather among the neighbourhood.

ŒD. Why, are there any dwellers in these said regions?

COL. Aye, surely, even the bearers of this deity's name.

ŒD. Does any one sway them, or is the authority in the people?

COL. These parts are governed by the king from the city.

ŒD. But who is he preeminent both in right and power?

<sup>d</sup> "its master." Pausanias speaks of altars in Colonus to equestrian Minerva and Neptune, and mentions an altar to Prometheus in the Academy, formerly a starting place for those who contended in the game *λαμπαδηφορία*. The scholiast says that there were brazen mines at Colonus.

<sup>e</sup> "not renowned." Brunck's idea is very different, "*non famâ magis quam ipso usu nota*," which if it be adopted, the sentiment may be referred to Athens in general; which "*μόνη τῶν νῦν ἀκοῆς κρείσσων ἐς πείραν ἔρχεται*." Thucyd. 2.



COL. His name is Theseus, offspring of Ægeus his predecessor.

ŒD. Would any one of you go to fetch him?

COL. With a view to what, to speak to him, or induce him to come<sup>f</sup>?

ŒD. That lending a little aid he may reap a great gain.

COL. And what advantage can there be at the hands of a sightless being?

ŒD. That which we shall say, we shall speak all of it endued with sight.

COL. Knowest thou<sup>g</sup>, stranger, how in this case to guard against failure? since noble art thou, to another's eye, save in thy condition. Tarry here, even where thou hast appeared, until I shall repair to the burghers of this place here, not those in the city, and report to them all this. For they at least will determine whether it be fit for thee to remain, or go thy way back again.

ŒD. My child, has the stranger quitted us?

ANT. He has so; wherefore thou mayest utter every thing in peace, my father, since I alone am by.

ŒD. Ye reverend powers of dread aspect, forasmuch as I have this day inclined me to the seats of you the first in this country, be not ungracious to Phœbus and to me, who spake to me, when he denounced in prophecy those numerous ills of mine, of this respite in a long lapse of time, I on arriving at the boundary-land, where I should obtain a resting place and hospitable

<sup>f</sup> "Frustra sunt conjecturæ doctorum virorum, quas commemoravit Elmsleius. Nam sana est veterum librorum scriptura, quæ sic est accipienda : ὡς πρὸς τὴν μολεῖν λέξων ἢ καταρτύσων ;"

<sup>g</sup> οἷσθ' ὡς. This is a similar construction with οἷσθ' ὡς ποίησον. Œd. Tyr. 542, on which see Hermann's note.

shelter from the venerable deities, that I should here turn the goal of my wearisome existence, laying the foundation<sup>h</sup> of profit to my hosts, but ruin to my dismissers, who thrust me forth: but that signs as pledges of these things should visit me, either earthquake, or some peal of thunder, or flash of Jove's lightning. I am sure then that it cannot be but that faithful omen from you hath brought me home by this my present journey to this grove; else had I never wending on my way encountered you the first; I sober, you adverse to wine<sup>i</sup>; nor had I seated me on this hallowed pedestal unprofaned by the axe. But grant me, ye goddesses, in unison with the oracles of Apollo, at length some accomplishment and final close of life, unless I seem to you too debased for this, I perpetually a slave to hardships the extremest man can bear. Come, ye sweet daughters of primeval Darkness, come, thou Athens of all cities the most esteemed, assigned by fame to Pallas the mightiest, compassionate this woe-begone phantom of a man in Œdipus; for indeed this is not my original frame.

ANT. Be silent, for there are now wending hither some personages advanced in years, to take survey of thy resting place.

ŒD. Yes, silent I will be, and guide thou my footsteps secretly out of the road to within the grove, until

<sup>h</sup> οἰκίσαντα, Hermann: and so Elmsley in his notes. But the common reading may be supported by various passages in Thucydides, in which οἰκεῖν means, to order or administer.

<sup>i</sup> "you averse to wine." 'Wine was never used in the sacrifices offered to the Furies. Hence the chorus, in enjoining Œdipus to propitiate the goddesses, expressly command him, μηδὲ προσφέρειν μέθυ, not to present wine.' Dale.

I shall have ascertained from these what words they will utter: for in such attention is centred wariness of conduct in action.

## CHORUS.

Look out, who, I wonder, was he? where abides he? where is he, having hurried from this place, of all men, aye, of all the most restless? Enquire for him, spy him out, look for him everywhere<sup>j</sup>. A vagrant, some vagrant is the old man, and not a native, or he would never have trespassed on the untrodden plantation of these immitigable virgins, whom we tremble to mention, and pass by without a glance, without a sound, without a word, uttering the silent language of reverential thought alone, but whom now there is a tale that one has come in no wise reverencing, whom I looking round the whole sacred precincts cannot learn where he can possibly be staying.

ŒD. Here am I, that man: for by the voice I see, as is the byword.

CH. Alas! alas! fearful to see, fearful to hear.

ŒD. Pray you look not on me as lawless.

CH. Now Jove protect us! who can the old man be?

ŒD. By no means one to congratulate on his fortunes being of the first order, ye guardian magistracy of this land. Nay, I evince it; for else had I not been creeping thus by light of eyes not mine own, nor, bulky, been leaning on the slender<sup>k</sup>.

<sup>j</sup> "Enquire for him." Hermann reads, *προσπεύθου, λεῦσσε νιν, προσ-δέρκου πανταχῇ*.

<sup>k</sup> Reisigius conjectures here *ἐπὶ μικρᾷς*, and quotes v. 750. (746-7. Brück.) Hermann paraphrases the passage thus: "Sum ego profecto

CH. Alas! alas! wert thou blind of eye from thy birth, since thou art at least grown old in this wretched life, methinks? But yet, if I for my part can help it, thou shalt never add to them these curses: for thou trespasses, thou trespasses; but beware thou stray not unheedingly into this verdurous grove unprofaned by voice, where the limpid basin flows blended with the gush of honied draughts. Wherefore, unhappy stranger, beware thou well: remove thee, away. A long way separates us; hearest thou then<sup>1</sup>, O woe-begone wanderer? If thou wilt offer any parley at my abode<sup>m</sup>, having quitted the prohibited precincts for a spot where all are permitted, then speak; but before that refrain thee.

ŒD. Daughter, what may one think?

ANT. My father, our duty is to behave ourselves as the citizens do, yielding where we may with honour, and obeying.

infortunatissimus: aliter enim non ita alienorum ope oculorum venissem, et exigui muneris causâ, qui magnus atque insignis vir sum, hoc in portu constitissem." The contrast Œdipus expresses (according to the translation) being to a general rule, there seems no impropriety in applying *συμφορῆς*, as it stands, to Antigone. The allusion to his and his daughter's appearance is certainly most pathetic, and in the manner of Euripides; for the difference between these poets seems to have been, not in their knowledge of the means, but their choice of the end. Here, accordingly, for a transitory purpose, to move the pity of his hosts, Œdipus alludes to his helpless condition of body; his end carried, he opens loftier views, and speaks to a loftier impulse, as in a nobler auditor. Euripides would have remained content with the first effect.

<sup>1</sup> *ἐπαύει*. Hermann agrees with the scholiast in supposing these words to indicate a fear on the part of the Chorus lest Œdipus should not hear them.

<sup>m</sup> *λέσχη*, literally "parlour."

ÆD. Now then take hold of me.

ANT. Even now I touch thee.

ÆD. Strangers, let me not be wronged for trusting to thee<sup>n</sup>, in quitting my station.

CH. Never fear that any one shall ever carry thee from these abodes, old man, against thy consent.

ÆD. Am I to walk forward?

CH. Go further on.

ÆD. Still?

CH. Lead him, damsel, further on, for thou understandest us.

ANT. Nay follow, follow me thus with feeble foot, my father, by the way I am leading thee.

\* \* \* \* \*

CH. Resolve thee, poor sufferer, as a stranger in a strange land, to detest whatever the city holds by nature odious, and what is welcome to it to respect.

ÆD. Do thou now, my child, lead me, that we may at once, adopting a pious course, be partly speakers, partly listeners, and not war with necessity.

CH. Here, no farther move thy foot beyond this terrace firm as rock.

ÆD. Thus?

CH. Enough, as thou hearest.

ÆD. Must I be seated here?

CH. Yes, edgeways on the end of the stone, bending short.

ANT. My father, this is my duty, see thou quietly adjust thy step by my step—

ÆD. Ah me, ah me!

<sup>n</sup> "to thee." Speaking to the Coryphæus now, to the Chorus before.

ANT. Leaning forward thine aged body on my friendly hand.

ŒD. Woe is me for my grievous calamity!

CH. Unfortunate, now that thou yieldest<sup>o</sup>, tell us, who of men art thou? who, thus rife of misery, art thou led about; what should I learn by asking to be thy native land?

ŒD. Strangers, I have no country, but do not—

CH. What is this thou warnest me against, old man?

ŒD. Do not, do not, do not ask me who I am, nor examine me with further question.

CH. What is this?

ŒD. Horrible is my generation.

CH. Speak it.

ŒD. My child, Oh me, what am I to say?

CH. Tell us of what extraction thou art, O stranger, by the father's side.

ŒD. Oh! woe is me! what will become of me, mine own child?

ANT. Tell them, since thou art indeed come to the utmost pass.

ŒD. Nay, I will tell it, for I have no means of concealing it.

CH. Ye delay a long while, but make haste.

ŒD. Know ye any son of Laius?

CH. O! O! O!

ŒD. And the line of the Labdacidæ?

CH. Great god!

ŒD. The lost Œdipus?

CH. And art thou he?

<sup>o</sup> χαλᾶς, v. line 844.

CÆD. Be not alarmed at what I say.

CH. Alas! O! O! miserable! O! O!

CÆD. My daughter, what in the world will presently befall us?

CH. Get ye far away out of this land.

CÆD. But how wilt thou make good that which thou promisedst?

CH. Doomed vengeance visits no man for that in which he has been the first outraged, that he retaliates it: but one deceit matched against other deceits requites the feeling of pain, not pleasure. But do thou, again an outcast from these abodes, again in banishment from this my land, hurry away, that thou fasten no further trouble on my country.

ANT. O strangers, do ye yet, touched with forbearance, since ye cannot brook the presence of this my blind father, when ye hear the confession of unpremeditated deeds, yet, I beseech you, strangers, show mercy to me, who in behalf of my father alone implore, implore you, looking in your eyes with eyes not sightless, as one that is clearly sprung from your blood°, that the unfortunate may meet with respect: on you as on a god do hapless we depend; but come ye, accord the unlooked-for favour, I beseech thee by all that from thyself is dear to thee, be it child, be it wife, be it cherished possession on earth, or hope in heaven. For thou couldst not, wert thou to search, discover the mortal, who, if a higher power led him on, could escape.

CH. Nay, be sure, child of Cædipus, that we com-

° Hermann here adopts the first explanation of the scholiast, ὡς ἂν τις κοινῆς ἀνθρωπότητος ἔχουσα τὸ συγγενές. Reisigius thinks the address is made to the Chorus as to parents.

passionate him and thee equally on the score of your distress: but in trembling fear of heaven's vengeance, we could not speak a word beyond what has now been said to thee.

CED. What profit is there then in glory, or what in good report that melts away to no purpose? that is, if men say that Athens is most devout to heaven, that she alone is capable of delivering the oppressed stranger, that she alone has power to aid him, and yet to me where is all this? ye men who, having disturbed me from these seats, are then for driving me away, terrified at a mere name? For surely it is not at my person at least, nor at my deeds, since at all events my actions have been suffered rather than done<sup>p</sup>, if I am compelled to speak to thee of my mother's and father's fate, on which account ye are scared at me. This I know full well. And yet how am I radically wicked, who suffered before I retorted, so that had I done it in consciousness, I had not even thus been reprobate? But now have I come to where I have come all unknowing it, but by those from whom I suffered well knowing what they did was I doomed to destruction. For all which I entreat you by the gods, strangers, as ye have raised me up, even so preserve me. And do not in your reverence of the gods, thereupon make the gods of no account, but believe that they look on the mortal who is pious, and that they no less look on the impious, but that never yet has there been escape of any man among men irreligious: with whose grace<sup>q</sup> do thou be-

<sup>p</sup> Thus Lear: "I am a man

More sinned against than sinning."

<sup>q</sup> ἔνν οἷς, scil. Θεοῖς, according to Hermann. Elmsley thought κάλυπτε, used for καταίσχυνε.



ware of casting shade on Athens the heaven-favoured, by truckling to unholy practices. But as thou hast accepted the suppliant under thy pledge, rescue and preserve me ; nor looking on my person of evil aspect despise me. For I am come, hallowed and pious, and the bearer of advantage to these thy fellow-townsmen. But when the sovereign, whoever he be that is your chieftain, shall be present, then shall he hear and know all ; but in the interim, by no means be thou a villain.

CH. Much and forcible reason is there to be awed at the sentiments uttered by thee, old man ; for they have been specified in no light words : but I am content that the princes of our land take cognizance of these matters.

CÆD. And where, strangers, is the present lord of this your country ?

CH. He resides in the city his fathers held in our land ; but the messenger who fetched me also hither is gone to bring him.

CÆD. And think ye that he will have any respect or regard for the blind, that he himself should come near me ?

CH. Assuredly, that is, when he shall hear what thy name is.

CÆD. But who is he that will tell him this tale ?

CH. Long is the way ; but many a saying of the wayfarers are wont to circulate at random, which he hearing, be sure, will come ; for much, old man, does thy name spread amongst all, so that even if he be slumbering at his leisure, hearing it is thou he will come hitherward in haste.

CÆD. But in happy hour may he come both for his

own country and for me: for what good man is not his own friend<sup>r</sup>?

ANT. O Jove, what shall I say, whither turn my thoughts, my father?

ŒD. Nay, what is it, my child Antigone?

ANT. I see a woman drawing nearer to us, mounted on an Ætnean steed<sup>s</sup>, while on her head a Thessalian cap shielding her from the sun encircles her countenance. What shall I say? Is it? is it not? or do my senses wander? I both affirm it, and deny, and know not what to say. Ah unhappy! It is none else; with a bright glance she hails me by the eye as she draws near, and gives proof that this is plainly Ismene in person and none other.

ŒD. How saidst thou, my child?

ANT. That I behold thy child and my sister, but this moment thou mayest discover her by her voice.

#### ISMENE.

Oh double salutation of a father and a sister to me most delightful, how, having hardly found you, can I in the next place for sorrow hardly look upon you!

ŒD. My child, art thou come?

ISM. Ah, father, distressful to look on!

ŒD. My child, hast thou appeared?

ISM. Aye, not at least without trouble to me.

ŒD. Embrace me, my daughter.

<sup>r</sup> Œdipus says this in allusion both to himself and to Theseus. Similarly the psalmist, "As long as thou doest good to thyself, men will speak well of thee."

<sup>s</sup> For the excellence of the Sicilian horses see Pindar's odes to Hiero of Syracuse, whom he calls founder of Ætna.

ISM. I clasp you both together.

ŒD. Ah! seed of a common stock!

ISM. O sadly wretched family!

ŒD. Meanest thou of her and me?

ISM. And of unfortunate me the third.

ŒD. My child, but wherefore hast thou come?

ISM. From precaution on thy account, my sire.

ŒD. From a longing to see me?

ISM. Yes, and for a message besides, myself the bearer, with the only one of our domestics whom I had faithful to me.

ŒD. But the young men thy brethren, where were they for the toil?

ISM. They are where they are. Dire are their present deeds.

ŒD. Out on them both, all fashioned as they are in nature and breeding of daily life in likeness to the customs of Egypt<sup>†</sup>! For there the males sit in-doors working at the loom, while their consorts always are procuring the means of support raised out of doors; but they whose proper care it was to take this trouble off your hands, my daughters, are keeping house at home

<sup>†</sup> Diodorus Siculus (i. 27.) thinks that the female ascendancy prevalent in Egypt, arose from a wish to perpetuate the memory of Isis' beneficent reign. The scholiast on Sophocles attributes the effeminacy of the Egyptian males to a policy of Sesostris, similar to that recommended by Cræsus to his conqueror. Whatever cause produced the petticoat government of that land, it has been sufficiently atoned for since, by the degraded condition of the women in Egypt for centuries past. One might conjecture chess to have been invented on the banks of the Nile during the prevalence of the ancient manners, but for the higher claims of the Lydians to inventions of the sort, who moreover, if Omphale may be taken as a specimen, were much on a par with their southern neighbours in female consequence.

like maidens, while you in their room weary yourselves in relief of my miseries, wretch that I am. One of you, from the moment she left off the nurture of a child, and acquired strength of frame, perpetually, to her sad fortune wandering with me, is the old man's guide, many a time straying famished and barefooted through the wild forest, and suffering, poor victim, from many a storm and many a scorching sun, she holds but secondary the comforts of her residence at home, if her father can be maintained. But thou, my child, heretofore hast come forth without the Thebans' privity, bringing thy father all the prophecies which were divulged touching this mortal mould, and stoodest up my trusty protectress when I was being ejected from my country; and now again what tidings bringing to thy father comest thou, Ismene? what moving cause has roused thee from home? For thou comest not empty-handed at least, this I well know, nor without conveying to me some alarm.

ISM. The hardships I underwent, my father, in my search for thy abode, where thou wert inhabiting, I will pass by and omit; for I have no wish twice to be pained, both in the suffering them and again anew in the recital. But the mischiefs which now environ thy two luckless sons, to signify those to thee have I come. For erewhile their strong desire was both to resign the throne to Creon, and to refrain from polluting the city, when they reasoned over the long-existing destruction of their race, how it had fallen on thy doomed house: but now from some higher power and from a depraved mind there has arisen between them trebly wretched a baleful feud, to appropriate to themselves the sovereignty and

kingly sway. And the younger and inferior in time of birth deprives the elder born Polynices<sup>u</sup> of his throne, and has expelled him from his country. But he, as is the prevailing rumour amongst us, having retired in exile to the vale of Argos, is attaching to him both a new connection and armed friends confederate; as if Argos were forthwith either to surpass the Cadmeian plain in glory, or to exalt it to heaven. This is no sort<sup>v</sup> of words, my father, but fearful facts. Thy troubles, however, in what way the gods will commiserate, I cannot learn.

ÆD. Why, hadst thou at this time a hope that the gods would take any thought for me, that I might at length be saved?

ISM. Yes, that have I, from the present oracles at least, my father.

ÆD. Of what nature these? and what has been prophesied, my child?

ISM. That thou<sup>w</sup> wilt one day be an object of search to the men of that land both in death and life, for their own safety's sake.

ÆD. But who could derive benefit from such an one as I?

ISM. 'Tis said that on thee depends their power.

ÆD. Why then, when I no longer am, then it seems I am a made man.

<sup>u</sup> Euripides, on the contrary, makes Eteocles the elder, and is supported by other writers.

<sup>v</sup> "sort," contemptuously: "ye shall be slain all the sort of you."

<sup>w</sup> "That thou." Hermann complains here of a want of judgement in the poet, in having excited his hearers to the expectation of some new oracle, when about to produce nothing more than they were already informed of by Ædipus.

ISM. Yes, for now the gods stablish thee, before now they cast thee down.

ŒD. Yet 'tis a paltry favour to set up in age one who in youth has fallen.

ISM. Be assured, however, that Creon, on account of these things, will shortly come, and in no long time.

ŒD. To do what, my daughter?—tell me.

ISM. To place thee near the Cadmean land, that they may have thee in their power; but thou mayest not enter the boundaries of the land.

ŒD. What aid is there from me lying at their gates?

ISM. Thy tomb if deprived of its just honours threatens them with danger<sup>x</sup>.

ŒD. Even without a god, any one might learn this at least by his natural sense.

ISM. On account of this, therefore, do they wish to place you near the land, not where you may be your own master.

ŒD. Will they even enshroud me in the dust of Thebes?

ISM. Nay, the blood of kindred forbids you, O father.

ŒD. Of me then sure they never shall obtain possession.

ISM. This therefore shall at some time be a heavy woe to the sons of Cadmus.

ŒD. What conjuncture having arisen, my child?

<sup>x</sup> Recte *δυστυχῶν*, quod *justis honoribus carens* significare videtur. Tali sepulturæ ne traderetur Œdipus, metuebant Thebani ab oraculo moniti, nec tamen eum in patria sepelire volebant. Hoc constat e v. 407. Elmsley.

ISM. By thy wrath<sup>y</sup>, when they shall stand at thy sepulchre.

CÆD. But from whom hearing what you pronounce, do you relate it, my child?

ISM. From men sent to consult the gods, returning from the Delphic shrine.

CÆD. And has Phoebus declared these things to depend upon me?

ISM. So they bring report, coming to the plain of Thebe<sup>z</sup>.

CÆD. Which then of my sons heard this?

ISM. Both alike, indeed; and well do they fully know it.

CÆD. And yet did these basest wretches, when they heard this, place the kingly power before the regret of me?

ISM. I grieve to hear the intelligence; but still I bear it.

CÆD. But may the gods never quench to them this fated strife<sup>a</sup>; and with me may the issue rest concern-

<sup>y</sup> An allusion is made to the invasion of Attica by the Thebans; and victory is of course promised to the Athenians. The whole of this play, indeed, abounds with instances of flattery, and similar presages of triumph. The poet knew his countrymen:—no people in the world were ever more easily captivated with praise, when it was bestowed upon them universally; or more credulous of calumny, when it attached to an individual.

<sup>z</sup> When the noun is in the singular, it must be understood as meaning the nymph Thebe, and is thus most poetically and correctly rendered.

<sup>a</sup> The curses which Cædipus imprecates on his sons throughout this play, are bitter and strong, and perhaps we might add unnatural. He is what Dr. Johnson would have called “a good hater:”—stern and implacable, he seldom or never forgets his wrongs, and seems to feel like Lear—

How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is  
To have a thankless child.

ing this combat in which they now engage, and uplift the spear: so should neither he who now holds the sceptre and throne remain, nor he who has gone forth ever return again to the city. They, at least, neither retained nor defended me, their parent, thus with loss of honours driven out of the country; but in expulsion was I sent away by them, and was proclaimed forth an exile. You may say that the city then reasonably vouchsafed this gift to my wishes. No, in truth; since on that very day, when my spirit boiled, and it was sweetest to me to die, and to be stoned with stones, no one appeared to gratify this desire; but when already, after a lapse of time, all my griefs were mellowed, and I had learnt that my anger had rushed forth too severe an avenger of my former sins, then at length, after long stay, the state drove me by force from the land. But they, offspring of a father, and able to aid a father, were unwilling to do it; and, for want of a small word<sup>b</sup>, I wander abroad an exile and a beggar. But from these two, who are virgins, I receive, as far as their

The cause of this may perhaps be found in the ingratitude with which Sophocles was treated by his own children. We are told by Cicero, that this very play was written at the time that his sons presented a petition to court to have him removed from the management of his own affairs on account of idiocy. The poet's whole defence consisted in reading this splendid production; and he was not only acquitted of the charge, but applauded to the skies. Happy the poet that lived amid such a people; and happy the people that could boast of such a poet!

<sup>b</sup> That is, for want of a small word spoken by his sons in his defence. In this interpretation I follow Brunck, though neither one of the wisest of men, nor best of commentators. Others take *ἕπας* in the meaning it sometimes bears of *πᾶγμα*, res, and translate it "on account of a small crime." Granting the sins of Œdipus to have been involuntary, it would scarcely however be decent to make him talk of patricide and incest as such trifling matters.



nature permits them, both the sustenance of life, and security on the earth, and the offices of kindred. Those, in preference to a father, chose to sway thrones and sceptres, and to lord it o'er the land: but neither at all shall they gain me as an ally, nor shall ever any enjoyment of the empire of Cadmus come to them. This have I known, both hearing the oracles from her, and revolving in my mind at the same time the things that were of old delivered, which Phoebus hath erst consummated to me. Therefore let them both send Creon to search me out, and whosoever else is powerful in the state: for if you, oh strangers, are willing to defend me, along with these awful goddesses, who preside o'er your people, you will procure a mighty saviour to this city, and troubles to my enemies.

CH. Cædipus indeed is worthy of pity; both himself, and these his daughters: but since you introduce yourself in these words as the saviour of this land, I wish to recommend to you what is expedient.

CÆD. O dearest, interpret it to me, as now about to perform every thing.

CH. Institute now an expiation to those divinities to whom you first came, and whose plain you have trodden.

CÆD. In what modes?—oh strangers, instruct me.

CH. First bring sacred libations from the perennial fount, touching them with holy hands.

CÆD. And when I have taken the pure stream?

CH. There are cups, work of a skilful artificer, the heads and double handles of which do thou crown.

CÆD. With boughs or threads? or in what way?

CH. Wreathing them with the new-shorn wool of a young lamb.

ŒD. Well;—but as to what remains, where is it fitting that I should accomplish it?

CH. To pour the libations, turning to the rising morn<sup>c</sup>.

ŒD. Shall I pour them from these urns you speak of?

CH. Three streams at least<sup>d</sup>; but the last entire.

ŒD. With what having filled this, shall I offer it?—Teach me also this.

CH. With water and with honey. Add no wine.

ŒD. And when the earth with dark verdure shall have drank these?

CH. Placing in it thrice nine boughs of olive, with both hands, utter over them these prayers.

ŒD. These I wish to hear, for they are of the greatest consequence.

<sup>c</sup> The practice of turning to the sun on solemn occasions, or even addressing him as he rose, was a common superstition among the ancients. It is not exactly known what was the purport of this form; but it probably originated in the religious grandeur of the scene, and the emotions excited in the breast of the votary by the visible presence of the god. Clytemnestra, in the *Electra*, goes forth to tell her alarming dream to the rising sun:—

Τοιαῦτα τοῦ παρόντος, ἡνίχ' Ἥλιψ  
δείκνυσι τοῦναρ, ἐκλύον ἐξηγουμένους.

Cratinus also mentions it as a religious ceremony:—

Ἄγε δὴ πρὸς ἑὸν πρῶτον ἀπάντων ἴστω,  
καὶ λαμβάνε χειρὶ Σχῖνον μεγάλην.

And in the *Necyomantia* of Lucian we are told by Menippus, that, preparatory to his descent to Hades, Mithrobarzanes the Chaldean conducted him at day-break to the banks of the Euphrates, πρὸς ἀνατέλλοντα τὸν ἥλιον, ρῆσιν τινα μακρὰν ἐπιλέγων.

<sup>d</sup> Πηγαὶ hoc loco poëtice vocantur *libationes*. Verte igitur, *Ternas quidem libationes*, forsan e tribus puculis. Heath.

CH. As we call them the benevolent goddesses, that they may thus with benevolent hearts receive their suppliant, who brings us safety, do you yourself implore; or if there is any other in your place, uttering unintelligible sounds, and not exalting the voice. Then slow depart, without turning back. When you have done these things, I with confidence would stand by you; but otherwise, oh stranger, I should be inclined to fear concerning you.

ŒD. Oh, my daughters, do ye hear these stranger-dwellers in this land?

ANT. We have heard; and do you command what it is fitting to do.

ŒD. By me the way may not be trodden; for I am deficient in the want of power and in the want of sight,—two evils: but let one of you, going, perform these things; for I am of opinion, that one soul, if it be present with kindly feeling, will suffice in place of ten thousand in working this expiation. But with speed do ye something; only leave not me alone, for my body would not be able to crawl on unassisted, nor at least without a guide.

ISM. I go to perform it; but the place where I shall find the requisites, this I wish to learn.

CH. In that part of this grove, oh stranger maid; and if you have need of any thing, there is a dweller in the place who will inform you.

ISM. I will then, if you please, go for this purpose: but do thou, Antigone, here watch our father; for if any one toil for a parent, it is not fitting to bear remembrance of the toil<sup>e</sup>.

<sup>e</sup> This were a fine sentiment, if it came from any lips but those of the selfish and unamiable Ismene. She cannot do the most trifling piece of

CH. It is dreadful indeed, oh stranger, again to awaken a grief that has already long slumbered, yet still I long to enquire<sup>f</sup>.

ŒD. What is this?

CH. Concerning that sorrow which has arisen, wretched and inextricable, with which you have struggled.

ŒD. Do not, by thy hospitable title, open it up :— I have endured abhorred deeds.

CH. I wish, stranger, to hear correctly that report which has spread far, and nowhere yet ceased.

ŒD. Woe is me !

CH. Acquiesce, I beseech thee.

ŒD. Alas! alas !

CH. Obey me, for I also [will obey you] as far as you require.

ŒD. I have endured, oh strangers, the worst of ills; I have endured them unwillingly, heaven knows; and of these, nought was of my own choice.

CH. But to what are they to be ascribed?

ŒD. The state bound me, all ignorant, in an evil union, in the accursed bane of wedlock.

CH. Didst thou with thy mother, as I hear, fill a bed that is horrible to name?

ŒD. Oh me! these things, stranger, are death to hear; but these two from me—

service to her father without making a fuss about it, and taking credit to herself for her exertions.

<sup>f</sup> If the chorus had been possessed of a common share of delicacy or politeness, they would have restrained their longings, especially as they seem already to have been sufficiently acquainted with the revolting subject. There was an awkward pause, however, occasioned by the departure of Ismene; and they thought, perhaps, this conversation more dignified than a discourse on the state of the weather or any other vulgar topic.

CH. How sayest thou?

ÆD. Daughters, yet twin curses<sup>g</sup>—

CH. O Jove!

ÆD. Sprung from the throes of a common mother.

CH. And are they then thy daughters, and common sisters, can it be<sup>h</sup>, of their father?

ÆD. Woe!

CH. Woe indeed! Thou hast suffered the accumulation of ten thousand ills<sup>i</sup>.

ÆD. I have suffered things to be borne without oblivion.

CH. Thou hast done.

ÆD. I have not done.

CH. How, pray?

ÆD. I received a gift, which, would that I, wretched, had never merited to win from the state.

CH. Unhappy man! what then?—thou didst commit the murder.

<sup>g</sup> Vulgo παῖδες δύο δ' ἄραι. Id Heathius verti jussit, *filii vero duo noxæ*. Quem Elmsleius miratur non vidisse filias παῖδας, filios autem ἄρα ab Œdipo nominari. Ego utrumque miror. Nihil enim istis interpretationibus fingi invenustius potest. Filiorum nulla hic mentio. *Ἡ*, inquit, *ex me nata sunt filia quidem duæ, sed duæ noxæ*. Nempe et ipsæ labem originis gerunt, et patri, qui genuit, opprobria sunt. Ita hæc etiam Brunckium intellexisse puto. Παῖδε recte dedit Elmsleius, pariterque, quod nonnulli libri habent, ἄρα. Hermann.

<sup>h</sup> "can it be?" is expressed in the emphatic particle γε, which is frequently used in this sense, and is not always very easy to give correctly in English.

<sup>i</sup> Ἐπιστροφὰι κακῶν, *vortices malorum*. Musgr. Scholiastes συναθροίσεις. Winsenius *cumuli*, Brunckius *reciprocationes*, Reisigius *vicissitudines*. Tam multas significationes habet ἐπιστροφή, quarum vix ulla ab hoc loco prorsus aliena est, ut optimam eligere difficillimum sit. Elmsley.

ŒD. What is this? and what dost thou wish to learn?

CH. Of a father?

ŒD. Alas! thou hast inflicted sickening grief on grief.

CH. Thou didst slay.

ŒD. I slew,—but I have—

CH. What?

ŒD. Somewhat to justify me<sup>k</sup>.

CH. How?

ŒD. I will tell; for I both slew and destroyed unwittingly, and innocent by law, and ignorant, I approached the deed.

CH. But here is the king, Theseus, son of Ægeus, sent forth from the city by the fame of thee.

#### THESEUS<sup>l</sup>.

Learning from many, both in former time, the bloody destruction of your eyes, have I recognized you, O son of Laius; and now in the way hearing of you, I the more fully know you; for both your garb and your wretched head show us who you are: and pitying you, unhappy Œdipus, I wish to ask you, having what supplication to me or to the state, have you come, both you yourself, and she, the unfortunate

<sup>k</sup> Quod dicit, ἔχει δὲ μοι πρὸς δίκας τι, sic est intelligendum: *habet ea res mihi aliquid veniæ a facti justitia.*

<sup>l</sup> The character of Theseus is represented in a way that must have been highly agreeable to the descendants of the people he ruled. He is full of the most dignified and moral sentiments, and displays his generosity and pity in a very interesting manner. It might appear hypercritical to mention our only objection, that he is, perhaps, rather stiff, and not sufficiently spirited and fiery for the boldest hero of chivalrous antiquity.

maiden by your side? Inform me; for you would mention some dreadful task, from which I would shrink; since I myself at least know how a stranger, like you, I was reared abroad, and how in man's estate I struggled with the greatest number of dangers in my own person, in the land of strangers. From no one, therefore, who was a stranger, as you are now, would I turn away, so as not to assist in saving him<sup>m</sup>: for I have known that I am a man, and that to me there is no more share in to-morrow's day than to you.

OED. Theseus, your generous spirit has displayed itself in few words, so as to require me to say little: for you have declared who I am, and from what father sprung, and from what land I came; so that nothing more remains to me than to say what I seek, and the tale is sped.

TH. This very thing now teach me, in order that I may fully learn it.

OED. I come to bestow on you, as a gift, this my wretched body, no goodly object to the view; but the advantages to be derived from it are of greater consequence than fairness of form.

TH. And what good do you, coming, claim to bring?

<sup>m</sup> Virgil had this passage in his view in his speech of Dido to Æneas:—

“Me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores

Jactatam, hac demum voluit consistere terra.

Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.”

The bard of Mantua was apt to help himself very liberally both from the Greek and Roman authors. It would scarcely, however, be fair to say that he had been “at a great feast of the poets, and stolen all the scraps;” for it must be confessed that he had the taste to select the richest dainties and choicest morsels from the good things of his neighbours.

ŒD. In time you may learn it, not at all at present.

TH. Why, in what time will your gift be made manifest?

ŒD. When I die, and you shall become my burier.

TH. You ask the last offices of life; but the things intermediate, you have either forgotten, or hold in no account.

ŒD. For there these are concentrated to me<sup>n</sup>.

TH. But in a trifle you ask this favour of me.

ŒD. Look to it however: this contest is not trifling;—no, by no means.

TH. Whether do you speak of the affairs of your children, or of me?

ŒD. They would compel me to repair thither.

TH. But if they at least wish it, it is not creditable to you to fly.

ŒD. But they, when I myself wished [to remain] did not permit me.

TH. O foolish man, anger in misfortune is not good.

ŒD. When you have heard me, school me; but at present bear with me.

TH. Instruct me, for without judgment it does not befit me to speak.

ŒD. I have suffered, O Theseus, dreadful ills on ills.

TH. Will you speak of the ancient calamity of your race?

ŒD. No, in truth; since every one of the Greeks at least talks of this.

<sup>n</sup> “In hoc enim uno, (i. e. si meam sepulturam curaveris,) reliqua illa continentur.” Musgrave.



TH. For with what ill beyond the lot of man are you afflicted?

CEd. Thus it is with me: I was driven from my land by my own seed; and it is never permitted me, as being the slayer of a father, to return again.

TH. How, in truth, should they send for you, so as to live apart<sup>o</sup>?

CEd. The words of heaven compel them.

TH. Dreading what suffering from oracles?

CEd. That it is fated that they should fall by the stroke in this land<sup>p</sup>.

TH. And how should my interests and theirs become hostile?

CEd. O dearest son of Ægeus, to the gods alone old age is not contingent, nor indeed ever to die; but every thing else does all-powerful time confound. The vigour of the earth indeed decays, and the vigour of the body decays; faith dies, and falsehood springs up; and the same gale hath never at all blown, neither to friends, nor to state towards state. For to some indeed already, and to others in after time, the things that are sweet become bitter, and again friendly. And now if every thing is prosperously tranquil to Thebes with you, infinite time will, in his course, beget an infinite number of days and nights, in which, from an insignificant cause, they will dissolve with the spear their present harmony of plighted right hands in that place where<sup>q</sup>

<sup>o</sup> Miratur Theseus, quomodo revocent CEdipum Thebani ita, ut ille tamen propter patricidium non ingrediatur fines eorum. Hermann.

<sup>p</sup> CEdipus, more than once in this play, is not quite correct as to the place where he denounces the fall of his sons; but poets must be allowed some licence, and prophets some mystery.

<sup>q</sup> Heath, Elmsley, and Hermann, translate *iva*, in eo loco ubi. Schæfer alone considers it as denoting time, and not place.

my sleeping and ensepulchred corpse, long cold, shall drink their warm blood, if Jove be still Jove, and Phœbus son of Jove be true. But as it is not pleasant to utter words that should be undisturbed<sup>r</sup>, permit me to go on in the way I have begun, only preserving your own faith, and you shall never say that you received Œdipus an unprofitable inhabitant of these places here, if the gods do not deceive me.

CH. O king, even before hath this man shown himself as about to consummate these, and such as these promises to this land.

TH. Who, in truth, would expel kindly feeling towards a man like this<sup>s</sup>, to whom, in the first place, there is ever with us the common altar of our friendship of the spear? And next coming a suppliant of the goddesses, he pays no small tribute to this land and to me: which things revering, I will never cast away my favour to this man; but, on the contrary, will give him a seat in the land. But if it is agreeable to the stranger to remain here, I will appoint thee to watch him<sup>t</sup>; or if it is agreeable to go along with me, I grant you, O Œdipus, deciding on one of these to avail yourself of it; for in that way I will coincide with you.

ŒD. O Jove, mayest thou bestow thy blessings on such men as these!

TH. What then do you wish? to go to my palace?

ŒD. [I would] if at least it were lawful to me: but this here is the spot—

<sup>r</sup> *Τάκινον' ἐπη* is taken by some in the way I have given it, as words of awful sanctity; by others, as meaning the fixed and unalterable oracles.

<sup>s</sup> Or it may be, "Who would reject the offered kindness of a man like this?"

<sup>t</sup> Addressing this injunction to the chorus.

TH. In which you will do what? for I will not oppose you.

ŒD. In which I will conquer those who cast me out.

TH. You would boast a great gift of your residence here.

ŒD. If, while I accomplish it, there remain to you at least those things you promise.

TH. Be confident as to the part of this man, at least. I will never betray you.

ŒD. I will not indeed pledge you, like a wicked man, by an oath.

TH. You would gain nothing farther at least than by my word.

ŒD. How then will you act?

TH. Of what does the fear principally possess you?

ŒD. Men will come.

TH. But to these it will be a care.

ŒD. Take heed leaving me.

TH. Do not teach me what it befits me to do.

ŒD. There is need to one who fears.

TH. My heart does not fear.

ŒD. You know not the threats.

TH. I know that no man shall carry you hence against my will. Many a threat and many a vain word has anger menaced; but when the mind returns to itself, the threats are vanished. And to them, even though there has been courage given to say terrible things about taking you away, I know that the sea hither will appear long, and not to be sailed. I therefore bid you be confident, even without my care, if Phoebus conducted you: and still, though I be not present, I know that my name will protect you from suffering ill.

## CHORUS.

Thou hast come, O stranger, to the seats of this land<sup>u</sup>, renowned for the steed; to seats the fairest on earth, the chalky Colonus<sup>x</sup>; where the vocal nightingale, chief abounding, trills her plaintive note in the green vales, tenanting the dark-hued ivy and the leafy grove of the god, untrodden [by mortal foot,] teeming with fruits, impervious to the sun, and unshaken by the winds of every storm; where Bacchus ever roams in revelry companioning his divine nurses<sup>y</sup>. And ever day by day the narcissus, with its beauteous clusters, bursts into bloom by heaven's dew, the ancient coronet of the mighty goddesses, and the saffron with golden ray; nor do the sleepless founts<sup>z</sup> that feed the channels of Cephissus fail, but ever, each day, it rushes o'er the plains with its stainless wave, fertilizing the bosom of

<sup>u</sup> I have endeavoured to avoid the unpleasant pleonasm which deforms the opening of this beautiful chorus. I must, however, inform my readers, that it were perhaps more correctly rendered, "Thou hast come, O stranger, to the best seats of the land of this earth." Elmsley alone of the editors of this play, has sanctioned the construction adopted above.

<sup>x</sup> This is often translated, by way of being gay, "the silvery Colonus." Besides that the epithet is rather unmeaning, it is very bad taste to take any liberties which violate the locality of the scene, and destroy the natural picture to the eye.

<sup>y</sup> The nymphs of Nysa received the infant Bacchus after the death of Semele, and nursed him amid the mountains. There are frequent allusions to this circumstance to be found in the poets. Thus Eurip. Cyclop. 4.

ὦ Βρόμει—

Νύμφας ὀρέϊας ἐκλιπῶν ᾗχου προφούς.

Hyginus, Astron. Poet. lib. ii. 17.—"Liberum patrem —ut redderent nutricibus nymphis."

<sup>z</sup> Sophocles here avails himself of the poetical licence, at least if we may give credit in preference to the accurate Strabo;—ὁ μὲν Κηφίσσος—χει-  
μάρρῳδης τὸ πλεόν, θέρους δὲ μειοῦται τελέως.

the earth; nor have the choirs of the Muses spurned this clime; nor Venus, too, of the golden rein. And there is a tree, such as I hear not to have ever sprung in the land of Asia, nor in the mighty Doric island of Pelops, a tree unplanted by hand, of spontaneous growth, terror of the hostile spear<sup>a</sup>, which flourishes chiefly in this region, the leaf of the azure olive that nourishes our young. This shall neither any one in youth nor in old age, marking for destruction, and having laid it waste with his hand, set its divinity at nought; for the eye that never closes of Morian<sup>b</sup> Jove regards it, and the blue-eyed Minerva. And I have other praise for this mother-city to tell, the noblest gift of the mighty divinity, the highest vaunt, that she is the nurse of chivalry, renowned for the steed and unrivalled on the main: for thou, O sovereign Neptune, son of Saturn, hast raised her to this glory, having first, in these fields, founded the bit to tame the horse; and the well-pulled oar dashed forth by the hand, bounds marvellously through the brine, tracking on the hundred-footed<sup>c</sup> daughters of Nereus.

ANT. O plain, highest commended with praises, now it is fitting for you to make manifest these brilliant eulogies.

ŒD. And what new event is there, my child?

<sup>a</sup> Even the Lacedæmonians, in their ravages of Attica, spared this consecrated tree.

<sup>b</sup> The sacred olives were called, for what reason it is not well known, *Mopiai*; and the god who protected them had hence his title of Morian.

<sup>c</sup> This does not imply that each of the daughters had a hundred feet, but that being fifty in number, they mustered, at the usual allowance of two a-piece, this quantity altogether. The conceit is silly, mean, and unworthy of the poet.

ANT. Creon here, oh father, approaches near us, not without attendants.

ŒD. Dearest old man, from you now already may the goal of safety appear to me.

CH. Be confident, the safety shall be present; for though I am an old man, the strength of this land hath not grown old.

CREON.

Ye men, indigenous inhabitants of this soil<sup>d</sup>, I perceive from your eyes that you have felt some sudden fear at my approach, whom neither fear, nor assail with evil word; for I come not as wishing to do any thing, since I indeed am an old man, and I know that I come to a city which, if any other in Greece, is mighty in power. But I, of such an age, was sent to persuade this man to follow me to the Cadmean plain, not from the bidding of one, but charged by all the citizens, since it appertains by affinity to me, most of all the city, to mourn the sufferings of this man. But, O wretched Œdipus, listening to me, return home: all the people of Cadmus justly invite you, and of these I most of all, in as much as, if I were not by nature the basest of men, I grieve more over your misfortunes, seeing you unhappy, being indeed a stranger, and ever a wanderer, and going in want of life's subsistence by the aid of a single attendant: whom I,

<sup>d</sup> Brunck has much improved the text here, by substituting ἐγγενεῖς for the old reading, ἐδγενεῖς. The epithet is used with much address by the insidious Creon; for there was no point on which the Athenians loved more to be complimented, than on being γηγενεῖς or αὐτόχθονες, the aboriginal inhabitants of the soil.

wretched, never thought would have fallen into so much of contumelious suffering, as she in her misery has fallen, always ministering to you and to your person with the food of beggary, of such an age, yet not having experienced wedlock, but the prey of every one who meets her to ravish. Have I not then, oh miserable man that I am, uttered a wretched reproach against you, and me, and our whole race? But, for it is impossible to conceal the things that are exposed to the view, do you now, oh Ædipus, by the gods of our country, obeying me, conceal them, having been willing to return to the city and homes of your fathers, bidding friendly farewell to this city, for she is worthy of it: but your city, at home, may with right be more revered, being of old your nurse.

ÆD. Oh thou who darest every thing, and who from every just speech extractest the devices of wile, why do you attempt these things, and why do you, a second time, wish to catch me in what I should most grieve when caught? For formerly, when I was afflicted with domestic evils, when it was agreeable to me to be exiled from the land, you were not willing to grant this favour to my wish: but when already I was satiated with anger, and it was sweet to me to spend my days in my home, then you drove me out and cast me forth; nor then was the tie of kindred by any means dear to you. And now again, when you see this city meeting me with benevolence, and all its people, you attempt to drag me away, proposing harsh measures in a soft way. And yet what pleasure is this to love people against their will? as if any one to you, pressing to obtain, should grant nothing, nor wish to aid you, but

to you, having your mind satisfied with what you required, should then give it when the favour procures no gratitude, would not you reap this a vain pleasure? Such things do you indeed also offer to me, in word good, but in fact evil: and to these also will I tell it, that I may prove you base. You come to take me away, not that you may conduct me home, but that you may place me by your borders, and that your city may be freed to you unhurt by evils from this land. These things are not granted to you: but those are, my avenging spirit ever dwelling there in the land; and to my sons it is permitted to obtain at least so great a portion of the soil as only to die in. Do I not then conceive better of the affairs of Thebes than you? Much better, sure, inasmuch as I hear them from more unerring sources, from Phœbus\*, and from Jove himself, who is his sire. But your falsified lips have come hither, having much tongue-doughtiness; but by your speech you will gain more harm than safety. But, for I know that I will not thus persuade you, go, and suffer us to live here; for not even faring thus, shall we live unhappily, if we are contented.

CR. Whether do you deem, in your present words, that I am more unfortunate as regards your affairs, or you, as regards your own?

ŒD. It is most agreeable to me, indeed, if you are neither able to persuade me, nor those beside me.

\* The ancient superstition was, that Phœbus only retailed the oracles which he received from his father Jove. Thus Æschylus in the Supplices:—

Στελλεῖν ὅπως τάχιστα ταῦτα γὰρ πατήρ  
Ζεὺς ἐγκαθεῖ Λοξία



CR. Unhappy man, neither by time do you appear to have given birth to wisdom, but nourish the bane of old age.

ŒD. You are powerful with the tongue; but I never knew him a just man, who makes a good story out of every case.

CR. It is a different thing to speak much, and to speak to the point.

ŒD. As you forsooth utter these things both briefly and to the point.

CR. No, in truth, to whomsoever at least there is a mind like that in you.

ŒD. Depart, for I will speak also for these, nor watch me<sup>f</sup>, directing where it is fitting I should dwell.

CR. I call these to witness, not you, what words you give, in answer even to those who are your friends. If I should ever seize you——

ŒD. And who shall seize me against the will of these my allies?

CR. Assuredly, even exclusive of these things<sup>g</sup>, you shall grieve.

ŒD. With what sort of deed do you threaten this?

CR. Of your two daughters, having just seized one, I have sent her away, and the other I will quickly bear off.

ŒD. Woe is me!

CR. You shall speedily have reason to wail these things more.

<sup>f</sup> Ἐφορμῶν may also be as correctly translated in the sense we always meet with it in Thucydides, "holding your station over against me."

<sup>g</sup> That is, "exclusive of my overpowering your defenders, and carrying you off."

ŒD. Have you my child?

CR. Aye, and shall have this one too, in no long time.

ŒD. Oh strangers! What will ye do? Will ye betray me? and will ye not drive away the impious man from this land?

CH. Away, stranger, out with speed, for neither now dost thou work what is just, nor previously didst thou.

CR. If she will not go willingly, it must be your office to conduct her away against her will.

ANT. Woe is me, unhappy woman! Whither shall I fly? What aid shall I gain from gods or men?

CH. What doest thou, oh stranger?

CR. I will not touch this man, but her, mine own<sup>h</sup>.

ŒD. Oh, princes of the land!

CH. Oh stranger! thou doest not what is just.

CR. It is just.

CH. How just?

CR. I carry away mine own.

ANT. Oh state!

CH. What doest thou, oh stranger? Will you not let her go? Quickly shall you come to the trial of arms.

CR. Hold off.

CH. Not from you at least, while bent on these things.

ŒD. For you war with the state, if you injure me in aught.

CH. Have I not foretold this?

<sup>h</sup> "My kinswoman," which she was by being the daughter of his sister Jocasta. This was but an indifferent plea, however, for carrying her off from her father.

CR. Let go the maid immediately from your hands.

CH. Command not those things of which you are not master.

CR. I bid you let go.

CH. And I bid you proceed on your way. Come hither, come, come, ye dwellers in the place. The city, my city, is violated by force. Hither come to me.

ANT. Oh strangers! strangers! I, wretched, am dragged away.

ŒD. Where, my child, are you?

ANT. I go away by force.

ŒD. Stretch forth, my daughter, your hands.

ANT. But I have not the power.

CR. Will you not drag her away?

ŒD. Oh wretched, wretched man that I am!

CR. No longer then on these two props shall you travel along; but since you wish to prevail against your country and your friends, by whom I, appointed, do these things, even although king, prevail. For in time I know you will understand that you neither now do what is goodly yourself towards yourself, nor formerly did against the will of your friends, gratifying that anger which always works your ruin.

CH. Hold there, stranger.

CR. I forbid you to touch me.

CH. I will not, deprived at least of these two maidens, let you go.

CR. You will quickly then cause a greater pledge to be redeemed by the city; for I will not lay hold of these two alone.

CH. But to what will you betake yourself?

CR. Seizing hold of this man I will carry him away.

CH. Your threat is dreadful.

CR. Believe me that it shall soon be now accomplished, if the ruler of this land prevent me not.

ŒD. O shameless voice ! for will you touch me ?

CR. I command you to be silent.

ŒD. No ; for may not these goddesses yet make me silent of this curse, at least against thee, who, O basest wretch, in addition to the loss of my former eyes, hast gone off, carrying away by force my only eye that was left ; therefore may the all-seeing sun of the gods give thee thyself, and thy race, some time or other, to grow old, like me, in a life such as this.

CR. Behold ye this, ye inhabitants of this land ?

ŒD. They see both thee and me ; and understand that, having suffered in deeds, I revenge myself on thee with words.

CR. I will not restrain my anger, but will carry him off by force, even though I am alone and slow through age.

ŒD. O wretched me !

CH. With how much audacity hast thou come, O stranger, if you deem you shall accomplish these things !

CR. I deem I shall.

CH. Then I no longer count this a state.

CR. In the cause of justice, even the small overcomes the great.

ŒD. Do ye hear what sort of things he utters ?

CH. Things which at least he shall not accomplish.

CR. Jove may know these things, but not thou.

CH. But is not this insult ?

CR. Yes, insult ; but it must be borne.

CH. Ho! all ye people! Ho! ye chiefs of the land!  
Come with speed; come, since they already are passing  
all bounds.

## THESEUS.

What at all is this clamour? What is the matter?  
From what fear at all have ye checked me in the sacri-  
fice of oxen at the altar to the ocean-god, who presides  
over this Colonus? Tell me, that I may know the  
whole, for the sake of which I have rushed hither more  
quickly than was agreeable to my feet.

CÆD. O dearest friend! for I recognise your voice, I  
have just suffered dreadful outrages at the hands of this  
man.

TH. Outrages of what kind? And who did you the  
wrong? Speak.

CÆD. Creon here, whom you see, has carried off my  
two, my only daughters<sup>i</sup>.

TH. How sayest thou?

CÆD. Thou hast heard such things as I have suffered.

TH. Will not then some one of the servants, going  
as quickly as possible to these altars, compel all the  
people, both on foot and on horseback, to hasten from  
the sacrifice with loosened rein, where the double-  
opening paths of the travellers nearest meet, that the  
virgins may not pass by, and I, vanquished by force,  
become a laughing-stock to this stranger<sup>k</sup>? Go, as I

<sup>i</sup> Literally, "the single pair (or yoke) of my daughters."

<sup>k</sup> Either to Creon, for not being able to prevent his success, or to Cædipus, for not having fulfilled the promises of protection and security made to him.

have commanded, with speed. And this man indeed, if I had come with the anger of which he is worthy, I should not have suffered to pass through my hands without a wound; but now, with those laws with which he entered the country<sup>1</sup>, with those, and no other, shall he be fitted. For you shall never depart from the land, till, bringing those virgins here, you place them plain before me: since you have acted in a way unworthy of me, of those from whom you are sprung, and of the country that gave you birth: you who entering a state that practises justice, and ratifies nothing without the law, and then, disregarding the authorities of this land by this irruption, carry off what you choose, and make them subject to you by force. And to me, you must have thought that there was a city destitute of citizens, or slavish, and that I was the same as nobody. And yet Thebes, at least, did not teach you to be base; for she is not wont to nurse unjust men, nor would she praise you, if she heard of you violating my rights, and those of the gods, carrying away by force the suppliant bodies of wretched mortals. Wherefore I, entering your country, though I had the justest pretences in the world, would not, without the sovereign of the land, at least, whosoever he were, have either dragged or carried away; but I would have known how it were proper for a stranger to conduct himself among citizens. But you yourself disgrace your own country, not worthy of reproach, and increasing years make you at once an old man and a dotard. I have said then both before, and

<sup>1</sup> That is, “*Quandoquidem sub amici specie venit, non pro hoste habebitur.*” Musgrave.

I repeat it now, let some one, as quickly as possible, bring hither the maidens, unless you wish to become a foreign dweller in this land by force and against your will<sup>m</sup>; and this sentence I pronounce to you equally with my mind and with my tongue.

CH. Do you see to what you have come, O stranger? so that by those from whom you are sprung you appear just, but are detected in doing what is base.

CR. I, neither considering this city without citizens, O son of Ægeus, nor without counsel, as you allege, have achieved this deed; but conceiving that no such violent love of my kindred would ever fall on these men, so that they would maintain them against my will. And I knew that they would not receive a parricide and wretch impure, nor one to whom there was found subsisting the unhallowed marriage of child [with mother]. Of this nature I knew with them the Areopagus' sage council coeval with the soil<sup>n</sup>, which does not permit such wandering beggars to dwell together in this city. On it relying I essayed this prey; and I would

<sup>m</sup> Μέτοικος was the name appropriated to designate a foreigner resident in Athens. There was a very large class of this description, as we may see by the numbers of them that went out in various expeditions during the Peloponnesian war. It is in this body that Theseus threatens to incorporate Creon; adding, for the sake of perspicuity rather than brevity, that it should not only be by force, but also against his will.

<sup>n</sup> Χθόνιον is translated by some, "subterraneous," referring it to the manner in which the council sat, always in the dark, and deep below ground. The compliments which Creon pays it are just; for though the nature of it be not so well known as might be wished, there is little doubt that it was one of the wisest and best institutions of antiquity. The proof of this is found in its rigid and impartial administration during the most corrupt times, and in its duration and reverence long after the more splendid glories of Athens had all departed.

not have done so had he not imprecated bitter curses on me myself, and on my race. In return for which, I, having suffered, thought fit to make this retaliation. For of anger there is no other old age except in death, but no grief affects the dead. You will therefore do whatsoever you please, since my being alone, even though I say what is just, makes me feeble. But to deeds, nevertheless, even being aged as I am, I will endeavour to make requital.

ŒD. O shameless audacity ! whom do you think you insult in this, whether me, an old man, or yourself ? who have uttered to me from your lips the slaughters, and marriages, and calamities, which I, wretched, have unwillingly endured. For it was thus pleasing to the gods, perhaps, of old, bearing wrath for some offence against the race<sup>o</sup>: since in myself at least you would not find any stain of guilt, in return for which I perpetrated these sins against myself and my kindred. For tell me, if the annunciation of heaven had come to my father by oracles, that he should die by his children, how can you justly cast up this to me, who had not at all any generative increase from father or mother, but was then uuborn ? And if again, when born to misery,

<sup>o</sup> The Calvinism, or rather the fatalism of the Greeks, was very strong. They implicitly believed in a predestined chain of evils, commencing with the guilty deed of some individual, and continuing through all his future race, till vengeance was fully wreaked by its extermination. The tragedians avail themselves very successfully of this superstition ; and the principle is in itself, indeed, finely calculated for heightening dramatic effect. There is something fearful in the darkling way in which the devoted victims of heaven's wrath are hurried on to penal destruction ; while there is an admirable opportunity afforded, by the innocence of the principal sufferer, to awaken and justify the sympathy of the audience.



as I was born, I came to combat with my father, and slew him, unweening of any thing I did, and against whom I did it; how, at least, could you justly censure that which was sure an unwilling deed? And are you not ashamed, wretch, to make me speak of the marriage of my mother, who was your sister? a marriage such as I shall speedily declare; for I therefore will not be silent, you at least having proceeded to this unhallowed tale. For she bore me, woe is me for my miseries! she ignorant, bore me ignorant, and having given me birth she produced to me children, her own reproach. But one thing, at least, then I know, that you indeed willingly have in these words reviled me and her, and that I unwillingly married her, and unwillingly mention this. Yet neither in this marriage shall I be talked of as wicked<sup>p</sup>, nor in the slaughter of my father, which you always cast up to me, bitterly upbraiding me. For answer me only one thing of what I ask you: If any one standing by here should immediately attempt to slay you, the upright man, whether would you enquire if your father were the murderer, or would you straightway avenge yourself on him? I think, indeed, if you love life, that you would take vengeance on the guilty, nor would consider what is just. In such evils I have also involved myself, the gods impelling me; to which declaration I deem that the soul of my father, though in life, would not say the contrary.

<sup>p</sup> The justification which Œdipus offers of himself in this speech is a little inconsistent with the violent remorse which he elsewhere exhibits. He was incensed, however, by the remarks of Creon; and might feel like many other people, who talk freely of their own imperfections, and yet get very wroth if their neighbours take the same liberty.

But you, (for you are not just, but deem every thing proper to mention, words that may, and words that may not be spoken,) reproach me with such things in the presence of these men. And yet it seems honourable to you to flatter the name of Theseus and Athens, how nobly she is inhabited<sup>a</sup>; and while you thus praise many things, you forget this one, that if any land knows to worship the gods with honours, in that this land excels, from which you have endeavoured to steal away me, myself, an aged suppliant, and have gone off with my daughters. In return for which, I now, invoking these goddesses, supplicate them and enjoin them in my prayers to come my allies, and aid, in order that you may well learn by what sort of men this city is guarded.

CH. The stranger, oh king! is virtuous; but his sufferings are utterly ruinous, and worthy of protection.

TH. There is enough of words, since the ravishers indeed hasten away, and we, the sufferers, stand still.

CR. What in truth do you command to a feeble man to do?

TH. To begin the way thither, and to go a guide to me, in order that, if you have our maidens in these places, you yourself may show them to me. But if those who have them in their power fly, there is no need to take the trouble; for there are others who hasten, whom never having escaped out of this country, shall they fulfil their vows to the gods. But lead on the way, and know that seizing, you are seized, and

<sup>a</sup> Or, "how nobly she is constituted."

that fortune hath taken you, the hunter; for possessions acquired by unjust guile are not preserved. And you shall have no other one to assist you in these things; since I know, from the daring at present exhibited, that you have not come unattended or unarmed for such great insults: but there is something, on which relying, you have done these things which it behoves me to examine, nor to make this city weaker than a single man. Understand you aught of these words? or do they appear to you to have been vainly spoken, both just now, and when you designed this deed?

**CR.** You will say nothing here to be found fault with by me; but at home we too shall know what it is fitting to do.

**TH.** Going now threaten. But do you, O Œdipus, remain here to us in quiet, believing that if I do not first die, I shall not cease until I put you in possession of your children.

**ŒD.** May you be blest, O Theseus! both for the sake of your generous spirit, and your righteous provident care of us.

#### **CHORUS.**

Would that I were where the gatherings of hostile men shall quickly mingle in the brazen din of battle, either by the Pythian shrines<sup>r</sup> or the gleaming<sup>s</sup> shores, where the awful goddesses foster for the world<sup>t</sup> those

<sup>r</sup> The shrine alluded to was dedicated to the Pythian Apollo at Marathon.

<sup>s</sup> Gleaming with the sacred torches made use of in the Eleusinian mysteries.

<sup>t</sup> There is something in the mystery and solemnity of this expression that

hallowed rites of which the golden key hath even come upon the tongue of the ministering Eumolpidæ<sup>u</sup>. There methinks that Theseus awaking the fight, and the twin virgin sisters will quickly engage with prevailing shouts in these regions: or somewhere are they approaching, from Æa's pastures, the western ridge of the snowy rock, flying on steeds, or with racings that whirl along the car? Dreadful will the martial spirit of the natives be found, and dreadful the might of the sons of Theseus: for every bit is gleaming, and every one is hastening to mount the steeds with frontlet trappings,—they who honour equestrian Minerva, and the earth-encircling king of ocean, Rhea's dear son. Do they fight? or are they on the point of engaging<sup>x</sup>? How my mind presages something to me, that they<sup>y</sup> shall quickly give up her who has endured dreadful things, and met with dreadful sufferings at the hands of her kindred! There will accomplish,—Jove will accomplish something this day. I am the prophet of successful strife. Would that I a dove, borne fleet as the whirlwind, with the speed of strength, might meet with an ethereal cloud, and view with mine own eye the heat of the affray! O Jove, omnipotent of gods, whose eye is over all, grant to the leaders of the people of this land in conquering

would half induce one to believe in Warburton's theory of the worship of the one and true God being preserved at Eleusis.

<sup>u</sup> The scholiasts give us different accounts of the first Eumolpus: but whoever he may have been, his descendants retained his name and office of priesthood at Eleusis.

<sup>x</sup> *Μέλλουσι* is foolishly given by Brunck "morantur," which is not only false to the meaning, but totally does away with the energy of the passage.

<sup>y</sup> The attendants of Creon.

strength to crown their ambush with the glorious prey; and thy hallowed daughter, Pallas Minerva; and the hunter Apollo, and his sister that pursues the swift-footed dappled fawns,—I implore to come with their double aid to this land and to its sons.—Oh wandering stranger, you will not say to your watchman that he is a false prophet, for I see these virgins again hither near approaching.

ŒD. Where? where?—What say you?—How said you?

ANT. Oh father! father! which of the gods would grant you to behold this best of men, who has sent us hither to you?

ŒD. Oh my child, are ye two present?

ANT. Yes; for these hands of Theseus, and of his dearest attendants, have preserved us.

ŒD. Come hither, oh daughter! to your father, and grant me to touch that body which I never hoped would have returned.

ANT. You ask what you shall obtain; for the favour is with desire<sup>z</sup>.

ŒD. Where, in truth, where are ye?

ANT. Here we are, approaching together.

ŒD. Oh dearest sprouts!

ANT. To its author every thing is dear.

ŒD. Oh props of a man—

ANT. Of an unhappy man, though, the unhappy props—

ŒD. I clasp what is dearest to me; nor should I any longer be utterly wretched in death, you two standing

<sup>z</sup> σὺν πόθῳ γὰρ ἡ χάρις, i. e. gratiam petis quam ipsæ ultro præstare cupidissimæ sumus. Musgrave.

by me. Firmly cling, oh my child, to both my sides; implant yourselves in your planter, and make me to cease from my former solitary and wretched wandering; and tell me what has been done, as briefly as possible, since few words suffice to virgins of such an age.

ANT. This here is he who preserved us: to him it is fitting to listen, oh father! and to you at least my business will thus be brief.

ŒD. O stranger, wonder not at my vehemence, if, my children having unexpectedly appeared, I lengthen my words! for I know that this delight, given by you to me in them, has arisen from no other; for you have preserved them, and no other mortal. And may the gods give to you, as I wish, both to yourself and this land; since among you, at least, alone of men, have I found piety, and equity, and truth. And having experienced them, I repay them with these words; for I have what I have through you, and no other mortal. And stretch out, oh king, your right hand to me, that I may touch it, and kiss, if it be lawful, your brow. And yet what do I say? How should I, who have been miserable, wish to touch a man with whom there is no stain of evils an inmate? I will not touch you, nor, therefore, will I permit you [to touch me]; for it is possible only to such mortals as have had experience of them, to join in supporting miseries like these. But do you, from that spot, receive my farewell, and for the future justly take care of me, as you have done to this present time.

TH. Neither if you have made the length of your words greater, being delighted with these children, do

I wonder; nor if, in preference to me, you have first chosen their conversation; for no displeasure from these things possesses me: for I do not strive to make my life more glorious by words than by deeds. And I prove it: for of those things which I swore, I have deceived you, old man, in nothing: for I am present, bringing these virgins alive, uninjured by what was threatened against them. And how, indeed, this contest was won,—what need is there vainly to vaunt that which you, at any rate, will learn yourself from these two, associating with them? But apply your mind to the tale that has just met me, coming hither, since it is trifling indeed to tell, but worthy to excite wonder: and it is fitting that a man should neglect no matter<sup>a</sup>.

ŒD. And what is it, son of Ægeus? Instruct me, as I myself know nothing of those things of which you are informed.

TH. They say that some man, being no fellow-citizen indeed of yours, but a kinsman, sits somehow a suppliant at the altar of Neptune, by which I chanced to be sacrificing when I rushed away.

ŒD. Of what country? Seeking what by this supplicatory posture?

TH. I know but one thing; for he requests, as they tell me, a short conversation with you, not full of trouble.

<sup>a</sup> Benedict suggests the reading of οὐδὲν ἀνθρώπων, on which he very plausibly observes: Quæ verba jam cum Terentiano illo, homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto, consentiunt. Duæ reliquæ lectiones hunc sensum produnt: Hominis non esse, ullum vilipendere negotium. Quæ sententia, cum certe negotia quædam hominum contemtu digna sint, ne vera quidem dici meretur.

ŒD. Of what kind?—for this sitting by the altar is of no slight import.

TH. They say that he, coming, requests to attain a conversation with you, and to depart without injury from his journey hither.

ŒD. Who then can he be who sits in this posture?

TH. See if at Argos there be any kinsman to you, who would seek to obtain this from you.

ŒD. Oh, dearest friend, hold where you are.

TH. What is the matter with you?

ŒD. Ask me not.

TH. Of what sort of thing?—speak.

ŒD. I fully know, hearing these words<sup>b</sup>, who is the suppliant.

TH. And who at all is he whom I should have cause to reprehend?

ŒD. Oh king! it is my hated son, whose words most painfully of all men would I endure to hear.

TH. But why? Is it not permitted you to hear and to refrain from doing what you do not wish? Why is it disagreeable to you to listen?

ŒD. This voice, oh king! comes most hateful to a father; and do not urge me of necessity to grant this request.

TH. But if his seat compel you, consider if the reverence of the divinity be not to be observed.

<sup>b</sup> ἀκούων τῶνδε, sc. λόγων. Brumoy conceives παῖδων to be the word understood: "Antigone et sa sœur devinent que c'est leur frère Polynice, et elles le disent à leur père." Pray what is the occasion of giving the young ladies more penetration than their father? The words of Theseus were so plain, that Œdipus, except he were deaf as well as blind, must have very easily made out the matter.



ANT. Father, obey me, though young I give advice. Suffer this man<sup>c</sup> to give gratification to his own mind, and to the god what he wishes; and to us twain grant that our brother should come: for be confident, that whatever he shall say inexpedient to you, will not pervert you by force from your purpose. And what hurt is it to hear words?—works of the most glorious invention are known by words. You begat him: so that neither, oh father, though he did to you the worst of most impious wrongs, is it lawful for you at least to repay him with evil<sup>d</sup>:—but suffer him; there are also to others bad children and fierce anger, but admonished by the incantations of friends, they are charmed out of their nature. But do you not now look back to those sufferings from father and mother which you endured; though even if you look on them, I know you will perceive the end of evil anger, how it comes in addition evil: for you bear no slight impressions of this, being deprived of your sightless eyes. But yield to us; for it is not good for those who request what is just to press, nor for you yourself to receive benefits, and having received, not to know to repay them.

ŒD. My child, ye gain from me by your speeches a reluctant pleasure. Let it be then as is agreeable to you: only, friend, if he shall come hither, let no one ever have power over my life.

TH. Once, old man, not twice, do I seek to hear such requests. I wish not to boast; but know that you are safe, if any one of the gods shall also preserve me.

<sup>c</sup> Theseus, not Polynices.

<sup>d</sup> The character of Antigone always appears in the most amiable light. Her sentiments breathe at once of the purest sisterly love, and of a spirit of forgiveness almost worthy of a christian.

## CHORUS.

Whoever seeks to live for a lengthened term, neglecting the mean, will be proved by my case<sup>e</sup> to cherish folly; since oft has length of days brought us nearer to pain, and you can see nought of joy when at least any one may meet with more than his wishes require; nor is there satiety that ends but with the grave, when that fate hath appeared that is repugnant to the nuptial lay, the lyre, and the dance, and death to close the scene. Not to have been born at all is superior to every view of the question; and this, when one may have seen the light, to return thence whence he came as quickly as possible, is far the next best. For when youth comes bringing light folly, who wanders without the pale of many sorrows<sup>f</sup>?—what suffering is not there?—murders, factions, strife, battle, and envy: and loathsome old age hath gained the last scene,—impotent, unsociable, friendless old age, where all ills, worst of ills, dwell together. In which state this wretched man, not I alone, as some promontory exposed to the north, is beaten on all sides by the dashings of the billows in the winter storm;—thus also dreadful calamities, bursting like waves over his head, ever present beat on him,—some indeed from the setting of the sun, and some from his rise, and some from his mid-day beam, and some from the twinklings of the stars of night<sup>g</sup>.

<sup>e</sup> Or, “in my mind.”

<sup>f</sup> Τίς ἔξω τοῦ πολέμοχθος εἶναι ἐπλανήθη. Scholiast.

<sup>g</sup> The poet, who through the whole of this chorus has been comfortably obscure, works himself up by the end of it into absolute mysticism. It seems like an imitation of the worst style of Æschylus, and bears very few marks of the correctness and good taste for which Sophocles is usually distinguished.

ANT. And in truth, hitherward to us, as appears, the stranger, oh father! unaccompanied, at least, by men, takes his way, shedding copiously tears from his eyes<sup>h</sup>.

ŒD. Who is he?

ANT. Even whom we formerly conceived in mind;—Polynices is here present.

#### POLYNICES.

Woe is me! what shall I do? Whether, sisters, shall I first weep over my own misfortunes, or those that I behold of my aged father? whom, on a foreign soil, I have found, with you two here, cast out, clothed in such a garment, whose loathsome aged filth hath fixed itself on the old man, wasting away his body, and on his sightless head his uncombed hair streams to the wind; and, congenial to these, it appears, he has the food of his wretched belly. All which things I, utterly abandoned wretch! too late learn: and I call you to witness that I have come, the worst of men, in providing for your support<sup>i</sup>: seek not this by enquiry from others. But since over every work is Mercy joint assessor to Jove on his throne, let her, oh father! also take her stand by thee; for of transgressions there is remedy, though no longer recall<sup>k</sup>. Why are you silent?

<sup>h</sup> ἀστακτὶ, not in drops, but in showers.

<sup>i</sup> Some give the meaning of this passage thus: "I call you to witness, that, though I am the worst of men, I have now come to provide for your support." This is plausible enough; but what immediately follows, τοῦτο μὴ ἐξ ἄλλων πύθῃ, makes it much more like an acknowledgment of guilt.

<sup>k</sup> This is another disputed point. The scholiast, whom I follow, explains προσφορά as meaning ἐπανάληψις: Brunck, "exprobratio:" and Musgrave supplies τῶν ἀκῶν after προσφορά. Remedia quidem adsunt, sed ea admoveere non licet.

—speak something, oh father! do not turn away from me. Will you not answer any thing to me, but send me away, dishonouring me, without speaking a word, or telling at what you are angry? Oh daughters of this man, and sisters of mine, but do you at least attempt to awaken our father's words, difficult to gain, and devoid of affability, that he may not thus, at any rate, send me away dishonoured, who am of the god at least the suppliant<sup>1</sup>, without replying to me a single word.

ANT. Speak, oh unhappy man! yourself, by reason of the want of what you are present; for oft have words, either causing some delight or displeasure, or moving somehow to pity, given some speech to the silent.

POL. But I will speak out, [for well you direct me,] first making the god himself my ally, from whose altar the king of the land raised me up to come hither, giving me both to speak and to hear with safe departure; and these boons, oh strangers, I should wish to gain from you, and from these my sisters, and from my father. But for what purpose I have come, I now wish, oh father, to tell you. I have been driven forth an exile from my native soil because I claimed, being sprung from elder birth, to sit on thy imperial throne. Wherefore, Eteocles, being by birth the younger, drove me out of the land; neither having conquered me by question of right, nor having come to the trial of hand or deed, but having persuaded the city: of which misfortunes I account your imprecated vengeance<sup>m</sup> to

<sup>1</sup> He must pay regard to me, as the suppliant of the god, though he feel no affection for me as his son.

<sup>m</sup> Literally "your Erynnis," a goddess who had the amiable task of presiding over curses and revenge.

have been the principal cause ; and then from prophets I also hear it declared in this way. For when I came to Doric Argos, having gained Adrastus as my father-in-law, I procured sworn associates to myself, as many as are styled the chiefs of the Apian<sup>n</sup> land and are honoured in war, in order that, having assembled with these an expedition, led by seven spears, against Thebes, I might either rightfully fall<sup>o</sup>, or drive forth from the land those who wrought these deeds. Well, enough ; why in truth do I now chance to have come ? I have come, oh father, bringing suppliant prayers to you ; I myself, at least, for myself, and for my allies, who now with seven squadrons and with seven spears, encircle all the plain of Thebe ; such as is Amphiaraus, the shaker of the spear, holding the first place in war, and the first in the paths of birds : and the second is an Ætolian, Tydeus, son of Æneus : and the third is Eteoclus, by birth an Argive : his father Talaus hath sent Hippomedon the fourth : Capaneus, the fifth, boasts that he will quickly in overthrow lay waste the city of Thebe : and the Arcadian Parthenopæus rushes the sixth, bearing the name of his mother, in former time long a virgin, having sprung from her throes, Atalanta's genuine son : and I, thy son ; if not thy son, but sprung from evil doom, yet called at least thine, lead the fearless host of Argos against Thebes : who

<sup>n</sup> Apia was the old name of the Peloponnesus. The origin of it is given, though with no great probability, in the Supplices of Æschylus, 268.

<sup>o</sup> Musgrave takes *πανδικως* along with *ἀγείρας* ; and Benedict, with *ἐκβάλοιμι*. There is no great occasion for forcing it so violently out of its natural place. Polynices means to say, that if he fell in attempting to regain his own, he would fall at least in a rightful cause.

all in supplication implore thee, O father, by these thy children, and by thy life, to mitigate thy heavy wrath against me, proceeding to the punishment of my brother, who drove me out, and robbed me of my country. For if there be any faith in oracles, with whomsoever you may join, to these the god declared that the victory would be. Now by our native fountains and our kindred gods<sup>p</sup>, I implore you to obey me, and to yield from your purpose, since we are poor and strangers, and you a stranger; and you and I live paying court to others, having gained by lot the same fortune. But he at home a king, unhappy me! laughing in common at us, pampers himself up: whom, if you accord with my inclinations, I will overthrow with slight trouble and time; so that, bringing you, I shall place you in your palace, and place myself there, driving out him by force. And this, if you assent to my wish, it is allowed me to boast; but without you, I am not even able to be saved.

CH. Having said, oh Œdipus! to this man, for the sake of him that sent him, what is expedient, again send him back.

ŒD. But if indeed, ye men, Theseus, the ruler of the people of this land, had not chanced to send him hither to me, claiming that he should hear my words, he had never at any time heard my voice; but now he shall depart gifted with that honour, and having heard too from me such things as will never cheer his life. You indeed, oh basest of men! who having the sceptre

<sup>p</sup> Nothing can be more beautiful and impressive than this appeal: even the old muddled scholiast is affected by it: παθητικόν ἐστι τὸ πρὸς πατριῶν κρηνῶν ὀρκοῦν, ὡς εἰ ἔφη, πρὸς τῶν ἐκθρεψάκτων σε ὑδάτων.

and the throne which your brother now sways in Thebes, yourself drove away your own father, and forced him to be an exile from the city, and to wear these garments, which you now beholding, weep, when you chance to have come into the same troubles of sorrow with me. But these things are not to be wept by me, but to be endured whilst I live, bearing remembrance of you, a parricide<sup>q</sup>. For you have made me familiar with this toil, you have driven me out, and by your means I, wandering, beg from others my daily subsistence. And if I had not begotten nurses to myself, these daughters, assuredly I should not have existed, as far as regards your part: but now these preserve me, these my nurses, these men, and not women, to assist in toil. Ye have been born from some other, and not from me. Wherefore the divinity beholds you, not at all just now, as he will presently<sup>r</sup>, if these squadrons are moved against the city of Thebe. For it is not given that you should overthrow that city, but first you shall fall distained with blood, and your brother equally. Such curses formerly did I emit against you<sup>s</sup>, and now I again summon them to come allies to me, in order that ye may think it fit to reverence parents, and may

<sup>q</sup> Polynices ab Cædipo videtur consulto *φονεὺς* appellari, ut æquali se calamitate a filiis suis adfici indicaret, qua ipse ignarus Laium patrem suum e vita sustulerit. Benedict.

<sup>r</sup> That is, "Fortune will then frown upon you."

<sup>s</sup> The scholiast gives rather a quizzical account of these former curses of Cædipus. His sons had been in the practice, when they sacrificed, of sending him a shoulder, but on one occasion they disappointed the old gentleman of his favourite part, and only sent him a thigh. He was so enraged at them for their *joint* neglect, that he uttered those curses which entailed ruin and death on their heads.

not treat them with dishonour, if such ye have sprung from a blind father: for these virgins did not do this. Wherefore the curses shall possess your seat and your throne, if Justice, famed of old, jointly preside with Jove over his ancient laws. But do you go to ruin, both spurned and disowned by me, basest of the base, taking with you these curses, which on your head I invoke, never to gain possession of your native land by the spear, and never to return to hollow Argos, but to die by a brother's hand, and to slay him by whom you were driven out. Such curses I imprecate, and I invoke the murky parent gloom of Tartarus to receive you in its mansions<sup>t</sup>; and I invoke these goddesses, and I invoke Mars, who has inspired you with this dire hatred. And having heard these words, depart, and going, announce both to all the people of Cadmus, and at the same time to your faithful allies, that Œdipus has awarded such gifts to his children.

CH. Polynices, I do not congratulate you on the way you have passed; and now go back again with all speed.

POL. Woe is me for my journey, and for my ill success! and woe is me for my associates! For what an issue of our expedition then have we set out from Argos? Oh, unhappy me! such an one as it is neither allowed me to tell to any of my associates, nor to turn them back, but remaining silent, to encounter this fate. Oh sisters! sprung from the same blood with me, but

<sup>t</sup> There is nothing, even in the curses of Lear, more strong and horrible than this. The expressions on the occasion of the thigh are not handed down to us; but it is to be hoped that they were not quite so bitter as this second and improved edition.



do not ye, since ye hear our father imprecating these harsh curses, if at least his curses be accomplished, and any return take place to you home, do not ye at least, by the gods, treat me with dishonour, but lay me in the tomb, and with funeral rites. And praise, which you now carry off from this man for the things in which ye labour, you will gain no less, and in addition, from your ministry to me.

ANT. Polynices, I beseech you in something to obey me.

POL. In what sort of thing, dearest Antigone?—Speak.

ANT. Turn back, as quickly as possible at least, your armament to Argos, and do not destroy both yourself and the city.

POL. But it is not possible. For how could I again lead back the same army, having once trembled?

ANT. And what need is there, O youth, again to give way to your anger? What gain results to you, having overthrown your native country?

POL. It is base to fly, and that I, the elder, should thus be laughed at by my brother.

ANT. Do you see then how you directly bear to fulfilment his oracles, who predicts to you death by each other's hands?

POL. Yes, he predicts it, but we must not yield<sup>u</sup>.

ANT. Woe is me, unhappy woman! But who will dare to follow you, hearing the prophecies of this man, such as he has delivered?

POL. We will not announce what is bad, since it is

<sup>u</sup> Or, "We (i. e. Eteocles and I) must not be reconciled."

the part of a good general to speak of success, not failure.

ANT. Thus then, O youth, are these things decreed by you?

POL. Yes, and do not indeed restrain me. But to me this expedition will be a care, though consigned to misfortune and ruin by my father and his Furies. And to you may Jove grant a propitious way, if ye perform these things to me in death; since to me in life, at any rate, you will not again have it in your power. And now let me go, and fare ye well, for ye never will more behold me alive<sup>x</sup>.

ANT. O unhappy me!

POL. Do not mourn for me.

ANT. And who, O brother! would not groan over you, rushing to evident destruction?

POL. If it be fated, I shall die.

ANT. Do not you, sure you will not, but obey me<sup>y</sup>.

POL. Do not persuade me what is not fitting.

ANT. Unhappy then am I, if I be deprived of you.

POL. These things rest with the divinity, to take place in this way, or that way. But I pray the gods that evil may never meet you, for you were unworthy to be in any thing unfortunate.

CH. These new evils, laden with doom, have come

<sup>x</sup> It would appear from this expression, that Antigone, in the agony of sisterly love, had thrown her arms around her ill-fated brother, and endeavoured thus to restrain him, when her tears and her prayers were of no avail. The whole scene is exquisitely tender and beautiful, and presents a fine contrast to the unnatural sentiments and stern curses which Œdipus had just before uttered.

<sup>y</sup> Such is the only way in which the force of the γέ, in this place, can properly be given.

upon me anew from the sightless stranger, if Fate be not working out some remedy. For I cannot say that any award of the gods is in vain. Time regards, ever regards these things, since again heaping up each day these other ills. — The firmament hath thundered, O Jove!

ŒD. O children! children! how, if there be here any dweller in the place, would he send hither the all-excellent Theseus<sup>z</sup>?

ANT. But what, father, is the request for which you summon him?

ŒD. This winged thunder of Jove will straightway bear me to the shades; but send with all speed.

CH. Behold how terribly this mighty bolt, hurled by Jove, is unspeakably crashing along. Terror hath crept along the summits of the hairs of my head. I have quailed in spirit: for the lightning of heaven is again blazing. What issue indeed will it produce? But I fear; for never does it rush from heaven without purpose or without consequences. O mighty firmament! O Jove!

ŒD. Oh my children, the predicted end of life hath come to me, and there is no longer escape from it.

ANT. How do you know it? by what do you conjecture it?

<sup>z</sup> Œdipus immediately perceives that his hour is come. Early in the play he mentions that he expected such a sign:—

Σημεῖα δ' ἤξιεν τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ παρηγγύα,  
ἢ σεισμὸν, ἢ βροντὴν τιν' ἢ Διὸς σέλας.

This circumstance is in itself productive of a sublime and almost appalling sensation; and the play proceeds from this point to the catastrophe in a strain of unequalled grandeur and effect.

ŒD. I know it well; but let some one, going as quickly as possible, send hither to me the king of the land.

CH. Oh! oh! Behold how terribly again the piercing<sup>a</sup> roar rolls around us. Be merciful, oh divinity, be merciful, if you chance to bear some dark doom to my mother earth: and may I meet with what is propitious; nor having seen a man never to be forgotten, may I somehow reap a bootless favour. Jove in heaven, to thee I speak.

ŒD. Is the man near? Will he yet, my children, find me alive, and possessed of my senses?

ANT. And what secret trust would you wish to commit to his breast?

ŒD. In return for the favours I have received, to give him the consummation of the favour I promised.

CH. Ho, ho, my son, come, come, if at the extremity of the beach you are consecrating the sacrificial altar to Neptune, god of the sea, come: for the stranger deems it right to return to you, and to the city, and to his friends, the just favours he has received. Hasten, rush, oh king!

TH. What common uproar again resounds from you, clearly proceeding from yourselves, and distinctly from the stranger? Has some bolt of Jove, or shower of hail burst upon you<sup>b</sup>? for one may conjecture every thing of this kind, when the god raises the storm.

ŒD. Oh king! you have appeared to my wish,

<sup>a</sup> Διαπύσιος, "penetrans;" by which may either be expressed the reverberation of sound through the sky; or the chorus may mean that the thunder thrills, if we may so say, through them.

<sup>b</sup> Ἐπὶ ῥάξασα—Supplendum τυγχάνει.

and some god gave you the happy fortune of this coming.

TH. But what new thing, oh son of Laius, has again arisen?

ŒD. This is the crisis of life to me<sup>c</sup>, and I wish to die without deceiving you and this city in what I promised.

TH. On what certain sign of death do you depend?

ŒD. The gods, themselves their heralds, announce it to me, being false to none of the previously-concerted signs.

TH. How sayest thou, old man, that these things are unfolded?

ŒD. The frequent continuous thunderings, and the many bolts flashing from the hand that is invincible.

TH. You persuade me, for I see you predicting many things, and these not of false report; and tell me what it is fitting to do.

ŒD. I will teach you, O son of Ægeus, things which uninjured by age, shall be stored up to this city. I myself, untouched by a guide, will straightway point out the spot where it behoves me to die. This never tell to any mortal, neither where it is concealed, nor in what place it lies, since it will ever provide you a defence against your neighbours, superior to many shields, and to foreign spears. But the things that are sacred and that are not uttered in words, you yourself shall learn when you come there alone; since neither would I declare them to any one of these citi-

<sup>c</sup> Or, "My life is verging to its close." The meaning of *ῥοπή* is taken from the turn of the balance.

zens, nor to my children, though I love them, But do you yourself always preserve them, and when you come to the end of life reveal them to the foremost in power alone, and let him ever show them to his successor; and thus you will inhabit this city unhurt by the men that sprung from the dragon's teeth<sup>d</sup>. But many cities, even though one rule them well, easily give way to insolence; for the gods full well, though late, pay regard when any one, heedless of religion, may betake himself to frenzy; which do you, O son of Ægeus, be unwilling to suffer. I instruct, however, one who knows such things. But let us now go to the spot, for a present impulse of heaven urges me on, nor yet let us feel awed. Oh, my daughters, this way follow me, for I in turn have appeared a new guide to you, as ye were to your father. Go, and do not touch me, but suffer me myself to find out the sacred tomb where it is fated for me to be ensepulchred beneath this soil. In this way, here in this way advance, for in this way there is leading me on Hermes the conductor<sup>e</sup>, and she, the goddess of the shades<sup>f</sup>. O light, rayless to me, formerly somewhere, once on a time, thou wert mine, and now, for the last time, my body touches thee: for now I go to conceal the close of my life in the shades. But, O dearest of friends! may both you, and this land, and your servants<sup>g</sup>, be blessed of heaven, and in your success remember my death, ever prospering.

CH. If it be lawful for me to worship with prayers

<sup>d</sup> A designation of the Thebans, derived from their fabulous origin.

<sup>e</sup> That is, the conductor of the dead.

<sup>f</sup> Proserpine.

<sup>g</sup> The Athenian people.

the unseen goddess<sup>h</sup>, and thee, O Pluto, Pluto, king of those who dwell in night, I beseech you that neither with pain, nor in a death of grievous suffering, the stranger accomplish his way to the plain of the dead below the earth that encloses all mortals, and to the Stygian mansions. For many and undeserved sufferings having come upon you<sup>i</sup>, may the just divinity again exalt you. O ye goddesses below the earth, and form of the invincible monster, who, they say, has his lair by the well-polished gates<sup>k</sup>, and whom fame ever reports to growl from his den, the unconquerable guardian of Orcus . . . . . whom, O son of Earth and Tartarus, I implore gently to meet the stranger advancing to the infernal plains of the dead; thee I invoke, thee, who never slumberest.

## MESSENGER.

Ye citizens, I may in very brief words express to you that Œdipus is dead: but what was done, neither is there language to relate shortly, nor the circumstances, as many as took place there<sup>l</sup>.

<sup>h</sup> "Cur deos inferos adoraturus veniam quasi præfatur? An quod Pluto *εἰδὲά τε σπονχάς τ' ἔλαχε* (ut ait Stesichorus) non preces?" Musgrave.

<sup>i</sup> *Μάραν*. Having come vainly, because there was no occasion for them by prior guilt.

<sup>k</sup> The gates of the infernal regions appear to be called well-polished, or, more literally, polished by many, from the crowds that constantly made their entrance. We have something similar in Lucretius:—

" ——— tum, portas propter, athena  
Signa manus dextras obtendunt adtenuari  
Sæpe salutantum tactu, præterque meantum."

Lib. I. 317.

<sup>l</sup> If so very much took place during the time that the chorus was singing

CH. For has the wretched man perished?

MESS. Be assured that he has for ever bid farewell to life.

CH. How? Did the unhappy man die by a doom sent from heaven, and void of pain?

MESS. This already is fit even to excite astonishment. For how indeed he went hence, you too, being somewhere present, know, no one of his friends acting as guide, but he himself leading the way to us all. But when he came to the threshold of the steep descent, firm-rooted in earth with brazen steps, he stood in one of the many-dividing ways near the hollow cave, where lie the ever faithful pledges of Theseus and Pirithous<sup>m</sup>. Standing between which place, and the Thorician rock, and the hollow thorn and the sepulchre of stone, he sat him down. Then he loosed his squalid garments: and next, having called on his daughters, he ordered them from some place to bring the water for the bath, and libations from the running stream. And they, going to the conspicuous hill of the verdant Ceres, performed in a short time these injunctions to their father; and with

this stave, we are afraid that one of the unities, to which the Greeks paid such attention, must have been not a little violated.

<sup>m</sup> Theseus had made a solemn league of friendship with Pirithous on this spot, and agreed to accompany him to the lower regions to assist him in recovering Proserpine, the object of his passionate love, from the clutches of Pluto. The love and the friendship were alike ill-starred. Theseus was separated from his heroic companion by an earthquake, and with difficulty regained the light; but Pirithous was detained, and condemned to eternal darkness and chains.

“ ————— amatorem trecentæ  
Pirithoum cohibent catenæ.”

Horææ.



lavers and with robes they decked him out in the way that is ritual. And when he had satisfaction in every thing being done, and there was nothing any longer undone of what he desired, Jove indeed thundered beneath the earth, and the virgins were frozen with horror as they heard it; and falling at the knees of their father, they wept, nor did they cease from beatings of the breast and lengthened groans. But he, as he suddenly heard their bitter cries, folding his hands over them, said, “O my children, there is no longer to you this day a father: for all that was mine has perished, and you no longer shall have the difficult toil of supporting me: grievous it was, I know, my daughters; but yet one word does away with all these troubles: for you enjoyed love from no one more than from me, of whom deprived, you shall now spend happily the remainder of your life.” Thus clinging to one another, they all, with sobs, wept. But when they came to the end of their wailings, and no cry arose, silence indeed prevailed; but the voice of some one on a sudden loudly called him, so that all, trembling with terror, instantly raised upright their hairs. For the god oft in various ways summons him;—“Ho you! ho you Œdipus! why linger we to depart? Long since your part is tardy.” But he, when he perceived he was summoned by the god, calls on Theseus, the king of the land, to come to him; and when he came, said, “O beloved friend, pledge to my children the former faith of your right hand<sup>n</sup>; and ye, my daughters, to him; and solemnly

<sup>n</sup> “The faith which I have already tried and proved in your protection of me.”

ratify that you will never willingly betray them, but will always perform whatsoever you conceive advantageous to them." And he, without lamentations, promised, like a generous man, with oaths, to perform these things to the stranger. And when he had done this, Œdipus, touching with feeble hands his children, says, "O my daughters, it is necessary that, supporting generous resolution in your minds, you should depart from these places, nor claim to see what it is not lawful to see, nor to hear those speaking who should not be heard<sup>o</sup>. But depart as quickly as possible, only let king Theseus be present to learn what is done." So much we all heard him utter, and shedding copious tears, and groaning, we departed along with the virgins; and when we had gone away, turning in a short time, we saw the man no longer, indeed, anywhere present, but the king himself, holding his hand over his brow to shade his eyes, as if some horrible sight of fear had been disclosed, nor what was endurable to look upon<sup>p</sup>. Afterwards, in a little and in no long time, we see him paying adoration to earth and to Olympus, seat of the gods, in the same prayer. But by what fate he perished no one of mortals can tell, except Theseus; for neither did any bolt of the god, winged with lightning, destroy him, nor tempest raised from ocean at that moment; but it was either some messenger from heaven,

<sup>o</sup> We are afraid this would operate with most women as a strong inducement to disregard the advice.

<sup>p</sup> The picture to the eye is here admirable, and affords one of the best examples of the author's graphic power. The whole of the description, indeed, is at once interesting and sublime, and has obtained peculiar praises from the highest critical source,—the pen of Longinus.

or sunless plains of the shades beneath the earth, mercifully opening to receive him. For the man is not to be lamented, nor was he dismissed from life wretched with disease, but, if any other of mortals, worthy of admiration. And if I seem to speak not being in my senses, I would not yield to those to whom I appear deprived of sense.

CH. But where are his children and the friends who conducted them?

MESS. They are not far off, for the sounds of mourning not indistinct signify to us that they are approaching hitherward.

ANT. Woe, woe! alas! there is not, there is not to us wretched this grief<sup>a</sup>, and no other, to lament the accursed kindred blood of our father, for whom we firmly bore many toils in many places, and in this last shall endure unutterable calamities, seeing and suffering them.

CH. What is it?

ANT. It is not indeed possible to conceive it, my friends.

CH. Is he gone?

ANT. Yes, as you would feel most desirous he

<sup>a</sup> The scholiast has here very rashly ventured on a piece of criticism. His words are, τὰ ἐφεξῆς τοῦ δράματος οὐκ ἔστι εὐκαταφρόνητα. We differ with him *toto cælo*. The play ought to have ended with the speech of the messenger, and to have closed, as the interest closes, with the sublime catastrophe there so magnificently described. The whinings of the girls after this could not fail to appear feeble; and to complete this natural disadvantage under which they labour, the poet has contrived to render them most intolerably stupid. Some, however, may be of the pathetic scholiast's opinion; and to them we willingly make a present of αἶ, αἶ, φεῦ, φεῦ, and Co.

should. For why? whom neither Mars nor ocean overthrew, but the unseen plains, revealed to light, swallowed in a certain mysterious fate. Unhappy woman that I am! for to us has the night of destruction come over our eyes; for how, wandering either to some far foreign land, or over the billows of the deep, shall we gain life's hard-earned subsistence?

ISM. I know not. May bloody Pluto bear me down, to die unhappy along with my aged father; since to me at least, the life to come is not worth living for.

CH. Oh ye twain, best of children, it is fit to bear that well which comes from heaven, nor do ye too much inflame your grief: your lot is not to be found fault with.

ANT. There was then some desire even of miseries; for that which is by no means pleasant, was pleasant when, at least, I held him in my arms. Oh father! oh dear father! oh thou who art enveloped for ever in darkness beneath the earth, neither in your old age were you ever unbeloved by me, nor shall be.

CH. He has accomplished then——

ANT. He has accomplished what he wished.

CH. A thing of what kind?

ANT. He has died in a foreign land, as he desired, and he has a bed beneath the earth, in ever unbroken shade, nor has he left mourning without tears; for ever, oh father, this my weeping eye laments you, nor know I how it is possible for me, wretched, to banish such great affliction. Alas! you ought not to have died in a foreign land, but thus you have died deserted by me.

ISM. Oh unhappy me! what desolate distressing

fate again awaits me and thee, dear sister, thus bereft of a father.

CH. But since he has happily at least, dear virgins, closed the term of life, cease from this sorrow, for no one is a difficult prey to misfortune.

ANT. Let us haste, loved sister, back.

ISM. That we may do what?

ANT. A desire possesses me——

ISM. What desire?

ANT. To see the sepulchral home——

ISM. Of whom?

ANT. Of our father. Oh, unhappy me!

ISM. But how is this lawful? Do you not see——

ANT. Why do you reprove this?

ISM. And this, how——<sup>r</sup>

ANT. Why this so much again——

ISM. He has fallen unburied, and apart from every one.

ANT. Conduct me, and then slay me.

ISM. Woe, woe is me, unhappy! Where, in truth, henceforth shall I, thus desolate and in want, endure my wretched existence?

CH. Dear maids, fear nothing.

ANT. But where shall I fly?

CH. Even before ye have fled from falling into misery.

ANT. I think——

CH. What, in truth, do you think?

ANT. I know not how we shall return home.

<sup>r</sup> The meaning of these two or three speeches is obviously destroyed by corruption, or rather mutilation, of the text.

CH. Do not then enquire into it. Trouble possesses——

ANT. And formerly did; since at one time indeed it advances farther, and at another passes all bounds.

CH. Ye have then obtained for your lot a vast sea [of troubles.]

ANT. Yea, yea.

CH. I too assent to it.

ANT. Alas! alas! where shall we go, O Jove? for to what hope does the god now, at least, incite us?

THESEUS.

Cease, virgins, from your dirges, for in those cases where joy at least is stored up in the tomb, we ought not to mourn; for there would be indignation of heaven.

ANT. O, son of Ægeus! we fall down before thee.

TH. To grant what boon, ye maids?

ANT. We wish with our own eyes to behold the tomb of our father.

TH. But it is not lawful to go thither.

ANT. How sayest thou, king, ruler of Athens?

TH. He forbade me, virgins, that any one of mortals should approach those places, or address the sacred sepulchre which he tenants; and he said, if I did this, that I should always gloriously possess this land uninjured. These agreements of ours, therefore, Jove heard, and he that hears every thing, the god of oaths, son of Jove.

ANT. If these things are agreeable to him, they will suffice to us: but send us to Ogygian Thebes, if we

may in any way prevent the slaughter coming on our brothers.

TH. I will do this, and every thing at least which I am about to perform advantageous to you, and gratifying to him below the earth, who is just gone: for it does not befit me to weary in this task.

CH. But cease, nor any longer awake the voice of sorrow; for these things completely have ratification.





**ELECTRA.**

**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.**

**ATTENDANT.**

**ORESTES.**

**ELECTRA.**

**CHORUS.**

**CHRYSOTHEMIS.**

**CLYTEMNESTRA.**

**ÆGISTHUS.**

# ELECTRA<sup>a</sup>.

## ATTENDANT.

**O** SON of that Agamemnon who once commanded the army at Troy<sup>b</sup>, now mayest thou here present behold those [places] for which thou wert ever eagerly longing. For this is the ancient Argos<sup>c</sup>, which thou didst desire, this the grove of the frenzy-stricken daughter

<sup>a</sup> This play was translated into Latin by Attilius. Cic. de Fin. I. c. ii. §. 5. "*A quibus tantum dissentio, ut, quum Sophocles vel optime scripserit Electram, tamen male conversam Attilii legendam putem; de quo Licinius, ferreum scriptorem; verum, opinor, scriptorem tamen, ut legendus sit.*" See Bentley on Tusc. Quest. p. 56. Hermann.

<sup>b</sup> Euripides twitted Sophocles with this line as superfluous, who retorted with the same objection on the two first lines of the Phœnissæ. Sch. ad Phœn. Hermann thinks either exordium would be the worse for the omission.

<sup>c</sup> Argos is here applied to the country by Brunck; but according to the Museum Criticum N<sup>o</sup>. 1. "The cities of Argos and Mycenæ, being almost contiguous, went by the general name of Argos, as the two cities of London and Westminster are known by the common denomination of London." If the ancient reading, τὸ γὰρ—be revived, and the colon after δὲ πῶθεις removed, take ἄλλος in apposition with Argos. Brunck's reading injures the metre. Hermann quotes Euripides to defend Sophocles' boldness; Ἰνάχου ῥοαί: he considers Argos used loosely to denominate the whole country and its divisions alike.

of Inachus<sup>d</sup>, and this, Orestes, the Lycæan forum of the wolf-slaying god; but this on the left, the renowned temple of Juno; and for the place whither we are arrived, assure thyself thou seest the all-opulent Mycenæ: and this the habitation of the Pelopidæ teeming with murders, whence I formerly, having received thee from thy full-sister's hand, bore and rescued thee from thy father's bloody fate, and nourished thee thus far onwards in thy youth, as an avenger of his murder to thy sire. Now therefore, Orestes, and thou, Pylades<sup>e</sup>, dearest of foreign friends, what it is needful to do you must quickly determine, since already the brilliant light of the sun wakes clear the morning carols of the birds, and the dark night of stars has disappeared<sup>f</sup>. Ere therefore any of the inhabitants walk forth from his roof, we must confer in counsel<sup>g</sup>, since we are come to that point where there is no longer<sup>h</sup> any season for delay, but the crisis of action.

<sup>d</sup> Io, whose story is told in the Prometheus of Æschylus, from which play the word *οἰστροπληξ* is borrowed. The temple of Juno was, according to Strabo, fifteen stades to the left of the town: she was the patroness of Argos.

<sup>e</sup> Pylades was son of Strophius, a Phocian prince, by a sister of Agamemnon, and being educated with his cousin Orestes, formed with him a friendship that has become proverbial.

<sup>f</sup> Commentators disagree on the interpretation of this place. The scholiast suggests two constructions, an antiptosis, *μελαίνης νυκτὸς τὰ ἄστρα ἐκλείπειν*, which has been followed by Brunck, and *ἐκλείπει τῶν ἄστρον ἡμέλαινα εὐφρόνη*. Musgrave translates *ἐκλείπειν excessit*, understanding *ἄστρα* to mean the whole heavens, as in Virgil, *Æn.* III. 567.

“Ter spumam elisam et rorantia vidimus astra.”

And this last is approved of in the Museum Criticum.

<sup>g</sup> *ξυνάπτετον*. H.

<sup>h</sup> *ὥς ἐνταῦθα μὲν Οὐκ ἔστ' ἐτ'*—Mus. Crit. *ἐνταῦθ' ἐμέν*. H.

## ORESTES.

O most beloved of serving men, how evident are the proofs thou showest to me of thy natural integrity towards us; for even as a generous horse, although he be aged, in dangers has not lost his spirit, but pricks his ears upright, even so thou both urgest us forward and art among the first to follow us. Wherefore my determinations will I unfold; and do thou, lending an alert attention to my words, if in aught I miss of the occasion, set me right. For when I came a suppliant to the Pythian oracle, that I might learn in what way I should exact justice for my father from his murderers, Phoebus gave me an answer, such as thou presently shalt hear: "That in person, with armour and with martial host alike unfurnished, by craft I should steal the lawful slaughter of mine hand." Since then we have heard such an oracle as this, do thou entering, when opportunity shall introduce thee, into this house, learn all that there is doing, that being informed thou mayest tell us sure tidings. For fear not that with both thine own age and the long lapse of time they shall recognise thee, or even suspect thee thus tricked out<sup>i</sup>. But make use of some such tale as this, that thou art a Phocian<sup>k</sup> stranger, coming from Phanoteus, since he is the chiefest of the foreign allies they have. But announce, joining on [thy tidings] to an oath<sup>l</sup>, that

<sup>i</sup> Musgrave objects to this meaning of the word *ἡνθισμένον*, and also to the scholiast's idea: he proposes himself to render it "*canis capillis variegatum*." *ἄνθος* is certainly applied to the hair. Suidas and Moschopolus are against him.

<sup>k</sup> *Φωκέως παρ' ἀνδρὸς Φανοτίως* is Blomfield's reading. Mus. Crit. *Φωκέύς*. H.

<sup>l</sup> The objection of Camerarius, that Orestes should not be made to advise

Orestes is dead by a violent death, having been tumbled from his swift car at the Pythian games<sup>m</sup>. So let thy story stand. But we having, as he enjoined, first crowned my father's sepulchre with libations and locks cropped from my head, will then come back again, bearing in our hands a brazen-sided vessel, which thou also knowest is somewhere hidden among the brush-wood, that cheating them with words we may bring them pleasant tidings, how that my body is perished, already consumed by fire and reduced to ashes. For what does this pain me, when, dead in words, in deeds I shall be safe, and bear away renown? I indeed think no expression ill-omened which gain attends<sup>n</sup>. For already have I frequently seen the wise also in story falsely dying<sup>o</sup>: then afterwards, when they shall again have returned home, they have been the more honoured. As I presume that I also, coming to life subsequently to this report, shall yet blaze forth, as a star,

perjury, has given Musgrave great trouble; and he proposes for ὄρκῳ to read ὄγκῳ. But it is too true that Orestes, by his own admissions just after, could make, like Ulysses, his own principles and those of others equally subservient to his interests, without much remorse. For the suppressed word ἀγγελίαν, see Brunck's note.

<sup>m</sup> Literally, "from his chariot seat speeded by wheels:" τροχήλατος, *rotis agitatus*. *Scap.* on this place.

<sup>n</sup> Thus Menelaus in Euripides:—

κακὸς μὲν ὄρνις· εἰ δὲ κερδανῶ λέγων  
ἔτοιμός εἰμι, μὴ θανῶν, λόγῳ θανεῖν.

<sup>o</sup> This alludes to Pythagoras, who feigned himself dead to acquire the reputation of prophetic skill. Zalmoxis and Aristeus of Proconnesus, author of the Arimaspians, have similar stories told of them by Herodotus, B. IV. Hermann wonders at the commentators for their illustrations here, understanding the poet to allude to such distinguished men generally, as being at one time in disgrace with and banishment from their country, were afterwards held in greater repute than ever.

to my foes. But O land of my forefathers, and ye its gods indigenious, welcome me as prosperous in this my journey; and thou too, O abode of my ancestors, for, urged by an impulse from heaven, I come to purge thee by my just revenge: then dismiss me not in dishonour from this my country, but [make me] master of my wealth and the restorer of my house<sup>p</sup>. This now have I said; but, old man, be it at once thy care, having gone, to execute with caution thy duty, while we will go forth, for it is the season; which in fact is to mankind the greatest arbiter of every act<sup>q</sup>.

## ELECTRA.

Alas! ah me unhappy!

AT. Nay, but methought I heard from the door some female servant inside heaving a suppressed sigh, my son.

OR. Can it be the hapless Electra? wilt thou we tarry here and listen to her cries?

AT. By no means. Let us attempt to execute nothing prior to the commands of Loxius<sup>r</sup>, and from these to commence our course, pouring out the water of puri-

<sup>p</sup> This may be given better thus, perhaps: "And make me not a dishonoured outcast from my country, but a master," etc.

<sup>q</sup> Thus in *Philoctetes*, v. 837.

καιρός τοι πάντων γνώμαν ἵσχων  
πολὺ παρὰ πόδα κράτος ἄρννται.

<sup>r</sup> "The epithet 'Loxian,' so constantly used by the Greek poets, is interpreted by the scholia in two ways, either as referring to the oblique direction of his voice, (i. e. the ambiguity of his oracles,) or as belonging to him from the oblique path of the sun through the ecliptic." Oxf. Translation of Aristophanes.

fication to thy father, for this brings us both victory and strength in action.

EL. O holy light, and air that sharest equal space with earth, how many a strain of mournful dirges, how many a blow against my bleeding breast hast thou witnessed for me, when murky night shall have retired<sup>s</sup>! But now [to tell] of my livelong nights, the hateful couches of this house of woes are conscious; how oft I mourn for mine unhappy sire, whom in a foreign country gory Mars entertained not, but my mother, and Ægisthus the partner of her bed, lop off his head with murderous axe, as wood-cutters an oak. And for all this no pity is felt by any other save me, when thou, my father, hast perished so disgracefully and piteously. But never then will I desist from laments and bitter cries, as long as I look on the all-glowing beams of the stars, as I look on this daylight; so as not, like some nightingale that has lost her young<sup>t</sup>, to pour forth mine echo inviting to shrill lament to all, before these gates of my native home. O abode of Pluto and of Proserpine, O nether Mercury<sup>u</sup> and awful Curse, and ye ve-

<sup>s</sup> Ὑπολειφθῆ, schol. παρέλθῃ, Brunck, *recessit*. Musgrave says, “ὕπολείπειν, quod pro *deficere*, *minui* positum citat Budæus ex Aristotele, melius omnino hic convenit quam passivum ὕπολείπασθαι, quod *resto*, *supersum* valet. Utrum tamen legendum sit ὕπολειπῃ an ὕπολείψῃ, mihi non satis liquet.”

<sup>t</sup> Brunck translates the Greek word, “*pullis orbata*.” Musgrave, however, considering it an allusion to the fate of Philomela and Itys, renders it, “*liberorum suorum interfectorix*.” As Franklin observes on v. 147, Procne, who put Itys to death, is supposed by Æschylus, Euripides, and Aristophanes, (in his play of the Birds,) to have been changed into a nightingale.

<sup>u</sup> Mercury is addressed by this name in allusion to his office as conductor of the dead:—



nerable children of the gods, ye Furies, who behold them that unjustly perish, them that by stealth usurp another's bed<sup>x</sup>, come ye, lend aid, avenge the murder of our father, and to me send my brother, for alone I have no longer strength to weigh up the burden of affliction that presses down the opposing scale.

## CHORUS.

Ah! Electra, child, child of a most wretched<sup>y</sup> mother, why thus insatiably dost thou pine in lamentation, for Agamemnon long since ensnared [or cut off] by the treachery of thy crafty and most godless mother, and to an evil hand betrayed? O that he who is the worker of this might perish, if it be lawful for me to utter this.

EL. Offspring of noble parents, ye are come as the solace of my troubles; I both know and am conscious of this; in no wise does it escape me, nor will I forsake this [task] so as not to groan for my wretched father. But, ye that requite the boon of universal friendship, leave me thus to languish, alas! alas! I implore.

“ ————— Animas ille evocat Orco  
Pallentes, alias sub Tartara tristia mittit;  
Dat somnos adimitque, et lumina morte resignat.”

From the third office enumerated by Virgil, we may suppose that Electra's prayers had already been effectually addressed to this god, as Clytemnestra shortly after sends offerings to Agamemnon's tomb in consequence of having had her rest disturbed by dreams of ill omen.

<sup>x</sup> Hermann admitting an hiatus of some words before *τοὺς*, fills it up thus: *αἰσχροῶς λέκτρων προδότους εὐνάς*, quibus furto ereptus est proditus torus.

<sup>y</sup> “*Δυστανοτάτας*, Schol. *ἐξωλεσάτης* recte. Vide Musgravium ad Euripidis Herc. Fur. 1349.” Brunck.

CH. But bethink thee, thou wilt never resuscitate thy father at least from the lake of Pluto, man's common bourne, neither by shrieks nor prayers<sup>z</sup>. But from moderate [laments] to a grief past help, thou ever with groans art wearying thyself to death. In matters wherein there is no deliverance from evil, say, why art thou fond of misery intolerable?

EL. A fool is he, who is forgetful of his parents calamitously deceased. But the sorrower that mourns for Itys<sup>a</sup>, ever Itys, that affrighted bird, messenger of Jove, accords with my feelings at least. O all-wretched Niobe, thee, thee I account a deity, who ever in thy stony tomb weepst, alas! alas!

CH. Not to thee alone, be sure, my child, among mankind hath grief arisen, wherewith thou surpassest those within, with whom thou art from the same source, and by birth akin; as is the life of Chrysothemis and Iphianassa, and he that sorroweth in his youth concealed<sup>b</sup>, whom one day the renowned land of the Mycenians shall welcome, haply, in ancestry illustrious, under the benign conduct of Jove returning to this land, Orestes<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>z</sup> Hermann reads *ἀνταῖς*, the vestiges of which he thinks he has found in Hesychius: *ἀντήσαι*, (scribe *ἀντησαι*,) *λιτανείαις*, *ἀντήσεσιν*.

<sup>a</sup> Penelope, in the *Odyssey*, similarly describes her grief. *Od.* xix. 520. See some excellent observations on the line *ἦτε θαμὰ τρωπῶσα χέει πολυηχέα φωνήν* among Twining's remarks on the expression of musical sound by poetry. *Arist. Poet. Prel. Diss.*

<sup>b</sup> Hermann makes *ἀχέων* a noun, and construes it with *κρυπτῶ*. "Happy in a youth unknown to sorrows:" *semota a doloribus*. This is much less forced than the common version.

<sup>c</sup> The withholding this magic of a name till the last, to crown the affectionate appeal to Electra's happier thoughts, is worthy of Sophocles; and, if

EL. Whom I unceasingly expecting, wretch that I am! childless, husbandless, am ever roaming, drenched in tears, supporting an inexhaustible pain of miseries; while he is forgetful of all that he has received, and all he has been taught. For what message goes forth from me that is not mocked? Since he is ever longing indeed, but though he longs, he deigns not to make his appearance.

CH. Courage, my daughter, courage, Jove is mighty in heaven, who overlooketh and swayeth all things; to whom referring thy too bitter choler, be neither over indignant with nor forgetful of those whom thou detestest: for time is a lenient god. Since neither is the son of Agamemnon that lives on the pastoral shore of Crisa<sup>d</sup> without return, nor the god that reigns by Acheron.

EL. But from me the greater part of life hath already passed away in vain hope, nor can I longer endure, who parentless am wasting myself away, whose part no friend<sup>e</sup> on earth asserts, but like some worthless stranger I dwell in the chambers of my father, in raiment thus disgraceful, and take my place at empty tables.

CH. Pitiable indeed were the words at his return<sup>f</sup>,

equalled at all, is so in the turn given by Electra's wounded spirit to that which was meant so differently. This, however, none of the older editors have preserved; and Brunck's and Musgrave's annotations on this passage show their error.

<sup>d</sup> Crisa, usually written Crissa, was a large town of Phocis, said to be the capital of Strophius. It gave name to the Crissæan bay, the scene of several actions in the Peloponnesian war.

<sup>e</sup> This may be translated, "no affectionate husband."

<sup>f</sup> Alluding to the presaging sorrow of the Argive people on Agamemnon's

and pitiable that in thy father's chambers, when the adverse stroke of the all-brazen axe was inflicted on him. Fraud it was that prompted, lust that perpetrated, the murder, having fearfully brought into being a fearful shape<sup>g</sup>, whether now it were a god or mortal that did all this.

EL. Oh! that day, that dawned above all indeed most hateful to me: O night, O shocking woes of that horrible banquet—the disgraceful death my sire beheld from a double hand, that seized upon my life then cast away, that destroyed me! To whom may the mighty god of Olympus give to endure retributive sufferings, and may they never enjoy their splendour, having accomplished such deeds.

CH. Bethink thee: speak no further: art thou not conscious<sup>h</sup> from what a state thou fallest at present into hardships all thine own thus unworthily? For thou hast incurred over and above an excess of evils, continually gendering quarrels by thy discontented spirit.

return, the adulterous loves of Ægisthus and Clytemnestra being known to them. See Æschylus.

<sup>g</sup> Precisely Shakespeare's idea:—

“ Between the acting of a dreadful thing,  
And the first motion, all the interim is  
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream.”

Jul. Cæs. Act 2. Sc. 1.

<sup>h</sup> Musgrave, in his notes, proposes the following alterations in these lines:—

Οὐ γνῶμαν ἴσχεις ἔξ ὅσων  
τὰ παρόντ' οἰκεῖς, ἢ τ' εἰς ἄστας  
Ἐμπίπτεις οὕτω σκαιῶς.

He also interprets, and perhaps with correctness, ἄτη by *vesania*.

But these matters are not worth the strife, to cope with those in power<sup>i</sup>.

EL. Now by dreadful woes, aye, dreadful, have I been forced to it. I am fully conscious of my wrath, nor does it escape me. But enough, amid such atrocious crimes I shall never check<sup>k</sup> these miseries as long as life shall contain me. For from whom, O friendly race, could I ever hear a profitable word? from whom that purposes my welfare<sup>l</sup>? Forbear, forbear me, ye comforters: for these woes shall be reported (i. e. shall be) immortal! never will I rest from these troubles thus countless in my laments<sup>m</sup>.

CH. Nay, but with good will at least I advise, as an attached mother, that thou beget not woe on woe.

EL. And what measure exists to my wretchedness? Come, how is it honourable to be careless of the slain? with whom of mankind originated this<sup>n</sup>? May I neither be had in honour among [such as] these, nor if I am united to any blessing, may I dwell with it in tranquillity, if I repress the flights of my shrill-toned shrieks to the dishonour of my parents. For if he having fallen shall lie in earth, being nothing, and they shall not in turn give satisfaction with blood for blood,

<sup>i</sup> Herm. Ψυχῶ πολέμους, τάδε τοῖς δυνατοῖς

Οὐκ ἐριστὰ πλάθειν. "So as to cope with those in power on these points which admit not of gainsaying."

<sup>k</sup> ἄτας, see v. 208.

<sup>l</sup> Or, "whose ideas suit the time."

<sup>m</sup> That is, "never will I cease from the countless laments to which these troubles give rise."

<sup>n</sup> Or, "in whom of men hath this arisen?" This is perhaps the better translation. Brunck's Latin version has, *ubinam homo est eo ingenio natus?*

then may shame and piety from all mankind be annihilated°.

CH. I indeed, my child, came to promote at once thy welfare and mine own; but if I advise not well, do thou prevail, for we will follow in thy company.

EL. Ladies, I blush, if in my many lamentations I seem to you to be too downhearted, yet, for their violence forces me to do it, forgive me. For how could any woman of high family, looking on her father's wrongs, not act thus? wrongs that by day and by night I see continually budding rather than withering<sup>p</sup>? to whom, in the first place, the deeds of the mother that bore me have turned out most hateful; next, in mine own home I consort with the assassins of my father, and by these I am controlled, and from these it is my lot to suffer alike both bounty and privation: furthermore, what manner of days think you I pass, when I behold Ægisthus seated on my father's throne; and look on him dressed in the very garments that he wore<sup>q</sup>, and

° Timon's curse on Athens, when he quits it for ever, is a fine amplification of this prayer (if it be a prayer) of Electra. See Timon of Athens, Act 4, Sc. 1.

<sup>p</sup> Similarly Philoctetes :—

ἡ δ' ἐμὴ νόσος  
ἄει τέθηλε, καὶ πῖ μείζον ἔρχεται.

. V. 258.

<sup>q</sup> “ Vestimenta regibus solemniter gestata. Statius. Theb. v. 315. *notas, regum gestamina, vestes*: et vi. 80. *cultusque, insignia regni, Purpureos*. Germanic. Arat. Phænomen. *Reges—satis religiose tunicati*. Nonnus. K 20.

βασιλήϊα φαιδρὰ τοκῆος  
Δύσατο, πορφύρεῳ πεπαλάγμενα φάρεα κόχλῳ.”

Musgrave.

pouring out libations to the household gods, where he slew him? when I see too the crowning insult of all this, the assassin himself in the bed of my father with my guilty mother, if I must call her mother, thus cohabiting with him? So hardened is she, that she lives with that pollution, in fear of no avenging Fury; but as if in joyous mockery of what she has done, having looked out for that day on which she formerly slew my father by treachery, on that day she institutes the festive dance, and sacrifices the monthly offerings of sheep to her guardian gods<sup>r</sup>; while I, the miserable, witnessing all this at home, lament, pine away, and shriek over the ill-omened feast that bears my father's name; alone, to myself, for I have not power even to weep so much as my soul has pleasure in doing; since the woman herself, in words high-spirited<sup>s</sup>, speaks and reviles me with such harsh terms as these: "O god-detested abhorrence, to thee alone is thy father dead? Is none else of mankind in sorrow for him? May a wretched death be thine, nor may the nether gods ever release thee from thy present woes." Thus she insults me: but when she hears from any that Orestes is about

<sup>r</sup> "Clytemnestra, in imitation of the solemn honours paid to the gods and heroes on the new moons, called, therefore, *ἐμμηνα ἑρὰ*, instituted a monthly festival, with sacrifices to the gods her preservers, on the day on which Agamemnon was murdered. This was celebrated with songs and dances, and a feast insolently called *Epulæ Agamemnoniæ*." Potter. To which Franklin adds, that Dinias, in his history of Argos, informs us it was on the thirteenth of the month Gamelion, which answers to the beginning of our January, or, according to Potter, the latter end of that month, or beginning of February.

<sup>s</sup> Musgrave objects to the idea of Clytemnestra being noble in words, and proposes to read *λόχοισι γενναία*, *illa in insidiis fortis*.

to come, then infuriate she comes and cries aloud: “Art thou not the cause of all this to me? Is not this thy work, that didst steal and spirit away Orestes from my hands? But be assured that thou shalt pay a deserved penalty at least<sup>†</sup>.” Thus does she bark upon me, and with her close at her side sets her on to this that glorious man, her husband, that utter dastard, that very pest, that fighter of his battles with woman’s aid. While I, unhappy, expecting from time to time that Orestes will come upon them to put a stop to all this, am undone. For, ever purposing to effect something, he hath ruined my hopes both present and to come<sup>‡</sup>. In such a condition then, my friends; there is no room for either prudence or proper respect, but in evil there is absolute necessity to be subservient to evil.

CH. Come, tell me, whether sayest thou all this to us, Ægisthus being at hand, or having quitted his home?

EL. Even so. Think not I could walk abroad, were he near; but now he happens to be in the country.

CH. Truly then would I with greater boldness join with thee in discourse, if this be indeed so.

EL. Since he is absent, question what thou wilt.

<sup>†</sup> Indeed it is by no means easy to see why Electra had not ere this fallen a victim to the vengeance of her mother, as by her own account she took no pains to conceal her abhorrence of Clytemnestra’s conduct. Perhaps we must refer it to the same cause which, in the *Odyssey*, preserves Telemachus so long, superstition, to which the Greeks were most prone, and which by no means ceases with religion and virtue, as both the impious festival and penitential offerings of the Argive queen sufficiently prove.

<sup>‡</sup> By *οὔσας καὶ ἀπούσας*, Hermann understands her hopes in herself present and in Orestes absent. Many probably will disagree with him.



CH. Then I ask thee, what sayest thou of thy brother? will he come, or delays he? I wish to know.

EL. He promises at least, but promising he performs nought of what he says.

CH. Aye, for man in the performance of a mighty deed is wont to delay.

EL. And yet it was not with delay I saved him.

CH. Courage; he is naturally generous to aid his friends.

EL. I am confident of it, else had I not long to live.

CH. Speak nothing further at present, since I descry thy sister, by birth of the same father and mother, Chrysothemis<sup>x</sup>, bearing sepulchral offerings in her hands, such as are the appointed due of the dead.

#### CHRYSOTHEMIS.

Sister, what talk is this thou holdest, having come forth to the entrance of the vestibule; nor art willing to be taught by length of time not idly to gratify a fruitless rage? Nevertheless thus far I know myself, that I am grieved at present circumstances; so much so, that were I to acquire the power, I would disclose what are my sentiments towards them. But now in miseries I

<sup>x</sup> Thus Homer, *Il.* ix.

“ Yet more—three daughters in his court are bred,  
And each well worthy of a royal bed;  
Laodice, and Iphigenia fair,  
And bright Chrysothemis with golden hair.”

The original has *Iphianassa*, which Pope appears to have little reason for changing to *Iphigenia*, who had been sacrificed at *Aulis*. *Electra* is usually considered the same with *Laodice*.

think fit to voyage with lowered sail, and not fancy indeed I effect something; yet work them no mischief. Thus moreover would I have thee act; and yet the right is, not wherein I speak, but wherein thou judgest. But if I must needs live in freedom, I must wholly obey my master.

EL. Shameful at least is it<sup>y</sup>, that thou being from the father whose born child thou art, forgettest him, but art regardful of thy mother. For all these admonitions to me are taught thee by her, and nought thou speakest of thyself. Else choose at least one of the two, either to be senseless, or in thy senses to forget thy friends, that thou just now sayest, couldst thou but get strength to it, thou wouldst demonstrate thy abhorrence of these; but with me, whom am in all things bent on vengeance for my father, thou not only dost not cooperate, but also dissuadest me in action. Hath not this cowardice to add to misery? For instruct me, or learn of me, what advantage could accrue to me having desisted from these wailings. Do not I live? but ill, I know, yet well enough for me. And I annoy those [wretches] so as to attach honour to the dead, if with the dead there be any pleasure; while thou, our hater, hatest them in word, but in deed consortest with thy father's

<sup>y</sup> This whole scene between the two sisters closely resembles the first between Antigone and Ismene; as well in the dispositions of the parties concerned, as in the subject of their discussion, the necessary respect to be paid to the dead. And when we see some of the finest productions of the Greek language depending for their catastrophe on this point, we shall perhaps the less wonder that an idea so constantly implanted in the multitude as the connection of the dead with the living, should have taken root, even in so vigorous a mind as Aristotle's.

murderers. I then would never, not even if any one were purposing to bring me these thy gifts, wherein thou now wantonest, submit myself to these: no, to thee be the wealthy board set out, and plenty flow around thee: to me the only nourishment be that I pain them<sup>2</sup>; thine honour I covet not to obtain; nor wouldst thou, at least wert thou wise: but now when thou hast in thy power to be called the child of a sire the noblest of all, be called thy mother's: for thus to most men wilt thou show thyself base, a traitress to thy murdered father and thy friends.

CH. Nought wrathfully, in heaven's name: since there is profit in the words of both, wouldst thou but learn to make use of hers, and she in turn of thine.

CHR. I, ladies, am in some sort accustomed to her words: nor had I ever recalled to her mind [the subject] had I not heard of a most grievous affliction coming upon her, which will withhold her from these protracted lamentations.

EL. Come, tell me then the hardship; for shouldst thou tell me aught more galling than these present, I would no longer contradict thee.

CHR. Nay, I will tell thee all, as much as I know. For they purpose, if thou wilt not desist from these

<sup>2</sup> See Brunck's note. Musgrave, who retains the common reading, thus remarks: "Scholiastes et hoc in MSS. invenisse videtur, et præterea λιπεῖν, quod hunc sensum efficeret: *Mihi satis non deficere alimenta. Sed omnino retinendum λιπεῖν. Mihi instar pabuli sit, non me duntaxat, sed alios angere.*" Confer. v. 357. Hermann retains the common reading, τοῦ μὲ μὴ λιπεῖν, which he renders *mihi non dolorem creare (mihi hoc tantum esto pabulum)* and understands Electra to allude to the remorse she must experience, if she paid an impious respect to Ægisthus and her mother.

wailings, to send thee thither, where think not thou shalt ever behold the light of the sun; but living in a confined vault, without this country, shalt thou chaunt thy woes. Wherefore bethink thee, and never hereafter in thy misery blame me. For now it is thine to be wise in good time<sup>a</sup>.

EL. What, then, and have they resolved thus to treat me?

CHR. Most surely; when in fact Ægisthus shall come home.

EL. Nay, then, may he quickly arrive for this at least.

CHR. What words are these thou cursest thyself withal, unhappy?

EL. That he may come, if he purposes to do aught of this.

CHR. That thou mayest feel what suffering? Where can thy senses be?

EL. That I may escape as far as possible from you.

CHR. But hast thou no regard to thy present life?

EL. Aye, a fine life is mine, worth admiring.

CHR. Nay, it might be, an thou knewest how to be wise.

<sup>a</sup> It has been before remarked, that this scene resembled one in *Antigone*: the coincidence of the two plays is here made still more striking by the punishment with which Electra is threatened.

“ If mournful cries and wailings before death  
Availed, there is not one, be well assured,  
That e’er would cease them. Instant take her hence,  
Inclose her in the rock’s sepulchral cave,  
As I commanded; leave her there alone,  
Either to die, or there to live entombed.”

Potter, *Ant.* p. 168.

EL. Teach me not to be a traitress to my friends.

CHR. I teach thee not so, but to give way to those in power.

EL. Be this flattery thine; thou speakest not my wont.

CHR. Yet surely it is honourable at least not to have fallen from imprudence.

EL. I will fall, if needs I must, in avenging my father.

CHR. Our father, I am sure, grants indulgence in this<sup>b</sup>.

EL. These words it is the coward's part to praise.

CHR. But wilt not thou be persuaded and consent to me?

EL. No truly. May I not yet be so void of understanding<sup>c</sup>.

CHR. Then will I too begone on my way, whither I was sent.

EL. But whither art thou wending? to whom carriest thou these funeral gifts?

CHR. My mother sends me to make libations at my father's tomb.

EL. How sayest thou? to the deadliest of her human enemies?

<sup>b</sup> Thus Ismene to her sister:

“ I then (of those beneath the earth revered  
Imploring pardon, since by force constrain'd)  
Will yield obedience to our potent lord.  
Attempts beyond our strength no prudence show.”

Pott. Ant. v. 69.

<sup>c</sup> *Μήπω*, per *λιτόρητα* for *μήποτε*, since *πω*, as Buttmann has observed in his Greek Grammar, includes always a reference to past time. On this *λιτόρης* see Porson ad Hec. 1260.

CHR. Whom herself slew<sup>d</sup>. For this wouldst thou say.

EL. At the persuasion of whom of her friends? Whose pleasure is this?

CHR. From some nocturnal fright, to my thinking.

EL. O gods of my fathers! aid me even now.

CHR. Hast thou any cheering hope respecting this terror?

EL. Wouldst thou relate to me the vision, I then could tell thee.

CHR. I know not, save a little, to tell thee.

EL. Nay, tell me that. Many a trifling word, believe me, hath ere now both overthrown and established mortals.

CHR. There was a report that she witnessed a second time the presence of my and thy father having returned to life, and then that he, having taken the staff which once he bore, but now Ægisthus, fixed it in the hearth: and from it sprouted up a vigorous scion, wherewith the whole land of Mycenæ was overshadowed<sup>e</sup>. (This I heard her relating when she re-

<sup>d</sup> Homer's account is different; vid. Od. IV. 529.

Αὐτίκα δ' Αἴγισθος δολίην ἐφράσσατο τέχνην  
 Κρινάμενος κατὰ δῆμον ἐίκοσι φῶτας ἀρίστους,  
 Εἶσε λόχον, ἐτέρωθε δ' ἀνώγει δαῖτα πένεσθαι.  
 Αὐτὰρ ὁ βῆ καλέων Ἀγαμέμνονα, ποιμένα λαῶν.  
 "Ἴπποισιν καὶ ὄχεσφιν, ἀεκία μερμηρίζων.  
 Τὸν δ' οὐκ εἶδοτ' ὄλεθρον ἀνήγαγε καὶ κατέπεφνε  
 Δειπνίσσας.

He further adds, that Ægisthus alone escaped, both his own and Agamemnon's followers being slain.

<sup>e</sup> Compare the Choephoræ of Æschylus, from which Sophocles has borrowed the idea of the dream.

veals her dream to the sun<sup>f</sup>. But more than this I know not, save that she sends me in consequence of this alarm. Now by our country's gods I implore thee, yield to me, nor fall by imprudence. For if thou shalt repulse me, hereafter thou wilt send for me in trouble<sup>g</sup>.

EL. But, my beloved, of all this that thou carriest in thine hands, attach nothing to the tomb: for it is not lawful for thee, nor pious, to place funeral gifts, nor carry expiatory libations to my father from that hated woman. But away with them secretly, either to the winds, or to deep-sunk dust, where never any of them shall approach my father's [narrow] bed: but lie they in earth a deposit for herself, when she shall be dead. For had she not been naturally the most hardened of women, she in the first place had never at any time crowned these hateful libations for him, whom at least she slew. For consider, whether the entombed dead in thy opinion receives these honours in mood friendly to her: by whom perishing unhon-

<sup>f</sup> Under an idea that the god who dispelled the shades of night from the earth, was also capable of averting the evils which had been threatened during that night, the ancients, having been alarmed by dreams, used to tell them to the sun, and hence, says Franklin, Apollo was termed 'Ἀποτροπαῖος.

"Senserat ut pulsas tandem Medea tenebras,  
Rapta toris, primi jubar ad placabile Phœbi  
Ibat."

Val. Flacc. v. 330.

<sup>g</sup> Hermann has here ably pointed out the skill of the poet in connecting Chrysothemis' warning to her sister with the account of Clytemnestra's alarm, who would be made doubly vindictive in her purposes towards Electra by fear.

oured, like a foe, he was mangled, and for a purification she wiped off her spots upon his head<sup>h</sup>. What, thinkest thou to bear these as atonements of the murder for her? It cannot be. But leave these alone, and do thou having cut from the ringlets on thine head the extreme hairs<sup>i</sup>, and from me unhappy, mean this indeed, but still such as I have, give him this suppliant hair, and my girdle, not garnished with fineries<sup>k</sup>. And falling down, beseech him from the earth to come a kindly aid to us against our enemies, and that his son Orestes with mightier hand may alive trample under foot his foes, that henceforth we may crown him with wealthier hands, than wherewith we now gift him. In good sooth I think that he hath some plan in sending these dreams of horrid aspect to her. But, however, my sister, perform this service for both thyself and me an aid, and for the most beloved of all mankind, our common sire, lying in hades.

<sup>h</sup> Those among the ancients who had murdered any person, believed that the wiping their swords or any other weapon they had used on the head of the deceased, would prevent his avenging spirit from having power upon them. The cutting off and wearing under their arms a piece of flesh taken from the dead body was also thought a spell of like influence.

<sup>i</sup> “It hath been observed, that the ceremony of cutting off the hair, while it was obviously expressive of violent emotion, had a latent meaning couched under it. As the hair was cut off from the head, never more to be united to it, so were the dead cut off from the living, never more to return. This usage was not confined to the heathen world. It is taken notice of in Scripture: Ezekiel, describing a great lamentation, says, ‘They shall make themselves utterly bald for thee:’ c. xxvii. 31.” Notes to Trans. Min. Poet. Q. 191.

<sup>k</sup> “Defendi potest ἀλιπαρῆς, modo ea vox significare putetur comam non accommodatam supplicationi, ut quæ non satis compta atque nitide habita sit.” Herm.



CH. With piety the damsel speaks: but thou, my friend, if thou be wise, wilt do this.

CHR. I will do it; for that which is just has no good reason for one to strive with two, but to hasten its performance. But, in the god's name, my friends, be silence yours at my essaying these deeds, since if my mother shall hear of this, methinks I shall yet hazard this a bitter attempt.

CH. If I be not naturally an insane prophet, and wanting in wise judgment, Justice the prophetic [of herself] will come, bringing to our hands righteous mastery: she will pursue them, my child, at no distant period. Confidence rises within me, just now hearing the sweetly-breathing dreams<sup>1</sup>. For never is thy parent the king of Greeks forgetful at least, nor the ancient two-edged brazen griding axe, which slew him with most shameful insults. The many-footed and many-handed Erinnys of brazen tread shall come, that is concealed in dreadful ambush. For they to whom it was unlawful embarked<sup>m</sup> on the rivalry<sup>n</sup>, in bed and bridal unhallowed, of blood-polluted nuptials. For these deeds, observe, it holds by me that this portent can never, never be come upon us harmless to either the principals or the accomplices. Believe me, there are really no auguries to mortals in alarming dreams, nor in oracles, unless this apparition of the night shall an-

<sup>1</sup> That is, to the party of Agamemnon, in proportion as they came unwelcome and alarming to Clytemnestra.

<sup>m</sup> "Nominativus etsi pluralis simulque masculinus sit, potest tamen verbum singulare adjunctum habere, ut ostendi ad Eurip. Helen. 1378. 'Ἐπίβα igitur cum ἐπίβαν non mutaverim." Musgrave.

<sup>n</sup> Musgrave proposes to read ὁμλήματα.

chor at last in good°. O toilsome horsemanship of Pelops in old time, how woeful wert thou to this country. For since the drowned Myrtilus<sup>p</sup> was sent to [his last] sleep, hurled headlong forth in dire insult from his all-golden car, no troublous calamity hath ever yet been wanting to this house.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Let loose, it seems, again thou roamest; for Ægis thus is not here, who ever checked thee from dishonouring thy friends by being abroad. But now, as he is absent, thou heedest not me at least. Nay more, thou hast actually denounced me at large and to many, as that I am impudent, and, contrary to justice, am the aggressor in insolence to thee and thine<sup>q</sup>. Yet have I

° Musgrave considers the latter part of this chorus as out of place after the promise of a prosperous fortune to the house of Agamemnon. Yet as this could not be without a crime; since “sanguine quærendi reditus;” Hermann defends the transition made to the primal curse of the ill-starred royal family of Argos.

<sup>p</sup> Myrtilus, son of Mercury and Phaethusa, was charioteer to CEnomaus, king of Pisa, the father of Hippodamia, whose horses he rendered the most famous for their swiftness in all Greece. This it was which produced the confidence of CEnomaus in challenging his daughter’s suitors to the chariot race, and had already been the destruction of thirteen chiefs, when Pelops bribed Myrtilus with a promise of sharing the favours of Hippodamia. Thus allured, he gave an old chariot to CEnomaus, which broke down in the course, and killed him. When however Myrtilus demanded the reward of his perfidy, Pelops threw him into the sea, thus exemplifying the words of Shakspeare’s Henry :

“ They love not poison, that do poison need;  
Nor do I thee, though I did wish him dead.  
I hate the murderer, love him murdered.”

<sup>q</sup> Hermann places a comma after ἀρχω, not, he says, because the reading adopted by Brunck and others is incorrect, (v. Matth. Gr. Gr. §. 549.)

no insolence: but give thee evil words, since I so often am slandered by thee: how that thy father, no other pretence hast thou constantly, fell by my hand. My hand: I know it well, I have no denial to make of this. For Justice took him off, not I only, which thou oughtest to aid, wert thou haply in thy senses. Since this thy father, whom thou art ever wailing, alone of Greeks had the heart to sacrifice to the gods thine own sister, though he suffered not from pain, when he begat her, equally with me that bare her. Enough, teach me now for whose sake he sacrificed her<sup>r</sup>. Wilt thou say, for the Greeks? But they had no claim to kill my daughter at least. But was it then for his brother Menelaus? Having murdered what was mine, was he not bound to give me due satisfaction? Had not he two children<sup>s</sup>, for whom to die was more reasonable than for her, they being of the father and mother for whose sake was the voyage? What, had Hades a desire of my children, rather than hers, to glut himself with them? Or had all affectionate feeling for his children by me died away from their all-accursed father, yet lived in Menelaus? Were not these the acts of a witless sire, a villain in purpose? I indeed think so, even though I speak contrary to thy sentiments. But the deceased at least would say so, could she resume her

but because *πέρα δίκης ἄρχω* is a better sequel to the preceding *θρασεῖά εἰμι*.

<sup>r</sup> Herm. τοῦ, χάριν τίνος ἔθυ. αὐ. "In return for what, in favour to whom." Thus in the Nubes, ἀντὶ before τοῦ is omitted, v. 22.

<sup>s</sup> This, says the scholiast, though it militates against Homer's account, is in union with Hesiod's:

"Ἡ τέκεθ' Ἑρμῶνην δουρικλειτῷ Μενελάῳ,

Ὀπλότατον δ' ἔτεκε Νικόστρατον, ὄρον Ἄρηος.

voice. I then am not disheartened at what I have done; but if I seem to thee to judge amiss, do thou, preserving righteous judgment, chide thy neighbours<sup>t</sup>.

EL. Thou wilt not now at least assert that I having commenced with some offensive words, have then heard this from thee: but, wouldst thou permit me, I would rightly argue at once in behalf of the deceased and my sister.

CLY. Nay then I do permit; but hadst thou always thus begun in thine address to me, thou hadst not been offensive to listen to.

EL. Well then, to thee I speak. Thou ownest the murder of my father. Than this what confession could be yet more base, whether in fine with justice or without? But I will prove to thee that thou didst not slay him with justice at least; but persuasion from a villain, with whom thou now companiest, allured thee to it. Nay, ask the huntress Diana, in revenge for what those many winds detained them at Aulis: or I will tell thee, for from her it is not allowed thee to learn. My father once, as I hear, sporting in the grove of the goddess, roused on foot a dappled, antlered stag, in whose slaughter exulting, he chanced to drop certain [proud] words<sup>u</sup>. And, thenceforth angered, the maiden daugh-

<sup>t</sup> This appears ironical. Musgrave proposes

Γνώμην δικαίαν σχοῦσα, τοὺς φαύλους στέγω.

And translates it, *ipsa mentem puram habens, ineptos patienter fero*.

<sup>u</sup> The business of the ancient poets, and, till very lately, of our own, has constantly been to inculcate submission to the will of heaven, and respect for all things more immediately connected with it. In conformity to this proposed object, insolence to Minerva is stated by Calchas to be the cause of Ajax' madness; and the wound inflicted on Venus by Diomed

ter of Latona detained the Greeks, that my father to counterpoise the beast should offer up his daughter. Thus was her sacrifice; since no other release was there to the host, homewards or to Troy. On whose behalf, having been forcefully constrained, and having resisted much, he reluctantly sacrificed her, not for Menelaus' sake. If, however, for I will state even thy plea, wishing to profit him, he acted thus, ought he for this to have died by thy hands? By what right? Beware, lest in ordaining to mankind this rule, thou ordain thyself woe and repentance. For if we shall slay one for another, thou, mark me, shouldst die the first, at least hadst thou thy due. But look to it, lest thou set up a pretence that does not exist. For tell me, an thou wilt, in requital of what thou happenest at present to be committing deeds the most infamous possible: thou that coucest with the assassin, with whom thou erst didst destroy my father, and hast children by him<sup>x</sup>; while thy former virtuous progeny, from virtuous lineage sprung, thou castest out. How could I approve

leads to his expulsion from his home by an unfaithful wife; while the still more audacious, because more personal, insults to the deities offered by Laomedon, lay the towers of Ilium, the work of more than human hands, in the dust. Nor was the prince of lyric poets less religious than the tragedians: vid. *Ol.* 9. 56.

λοιδορῆσαι  
θεούς, ἔχθρα σοφία· καὶ  
τὸ καύχασθαι παρὰ καιρὸν  
Μανίασιν ὑποκρέκει.

Hence we see that it wanted but little supernatural influence to drive Ajax to the frenzy with which he was afterwards possessed.

<sup>x</sup> Pausanias mentions Erigone, a daughter of Ægisthus, of whom Ttetztes ad Lycoph. 1374. plainly calls Clytemnestra the mother. Herm.

of this? What, wilt thou say that this too is vengeance thou takest for thy daughter<sup>y</sup>? Basely, even shouldst thou say so [will it be said]. For it is not honourable to marry with enemies, for the sake of a daughter. But [no more,] for neither is it possible even to advise thee, thee, that ventest thy whole talk of how I slander my mother. Nay, I at least account thee a mistress rather than a mother to us, I that live a wearisome life, ever treated with evil from thee and thy paramour; while the other far away, having hardly escaped thy hand, hapless Orestes, wears out a melancholy existence, whom thou hast often accused me of bringing up as an avenger of thy pollution; and this, had I had power, I had done, of this be well assured. For this at least proclaim me to all, whether thou must as wicked, or insolent of speech, or teeming with impudence. For if I am naturally an adept in these practices, I am almost no disgrace whatever to thy nature.

<sup>y</sup> Euripides strengthens this plea by the addition of another, which the ladies will think more forcible, viz. that Agamemnon kept another woman, and even brought her into the house with his wife. This fact is thus alluded to by Ovid:

“Dum fuit Atrides unâ contentus, et illa  
Casta fuit: vitio est improba facta viri.”

Franklin.

Æschylus also mentions the arrival of Cassandra at Argos, and her prophecies of her own and Agamemnon's fate. Indeed the Grecian chiefs in general appear to have so little observed conjugal fidelity, that their wives' treachery hardly need be referred to the wrath of Venus, or any other deity. Ulysses alone (his loves with the goddesses must be excused on the score of influence beyond human power to counteract) appears to have had a just sense (vid. *Od.* I. 433.) of decorum in this particular, and accordingly his wife continues faithful to him throughout.

CH. I see her breathing rage ; but whether or no it exist with justice<sup>z</sup>, of this I see no further thought.

CLY. Why, what thought should I have about her at least, who in such terms hath insulted her mother, and that too at such an age<sup>a</sup>? What, does she not seem to thee likely to proceed to any crime without shame?

EL. Be now well assured that I feel shame at all this, even though I seem not to thee so to do : and I am conscious that I act as disbecomes both my age and myself—but alas ! for thy enmity and thy crimes compel me perforce to act thus, since by the base are base deeds taught.

CLY. O shameless creature ! doubtless I, and my words, and my deeds cause thee to speak a great deal too much.

EL. Thou speakest them, not I ; for thou doest the deed, and deeds find themselves words.

CLY. But never, no, by Diana my liege<sup>b</sup>, shalt thou go unpunished for this insolence, when Ægisthus shall return<sup>c</sup>.

EL. Seest thou? thou art hurried off into rage,

<sup>z</sup> Hermann corrects the scholiast's interpretation thus : " but whether Electra justly harbours anger," *ξύνεστι*, scil. *τῷ μέναι*.

<sup>a</sup> It is hard to say whether this is meant as a reproach to Electra's youth or maturer age. The context seems to intimate the former, but the probable age of Orestes the latter.

<sup>b</sup> Electra having in a former passage declared that her mother, as a murderess and adulteress, was unfit to enquire aught of the goddess of chastity, by this oath Clytemnestra means to contradict her.

<sup>c</sup> Take *οὐκ ἀλύξεις* here as equivalent to *οὐχ ἔξεις ἀλυσιν*, and understand *ἀλυσιν* not in a passive but an active sense ; not " effugium ejus qui effugitur," but effugium ejus qui effugit." Herm.

though having given me leave to say whatever I might wish; nor knowest how to listen. *Id.*

CLY. Wilt thou not then suffer me even to sacrifice amid sounds of good omen<sup>d</sup>, now that I have allowed thee at least to say thy all?

EL. I suffer, I bid thee, sacrifice; nor blame my lips, since I will speak no farther.

CLY. Then do thou, that art here with me, take up the offerings of various fruits, that to this king I may offer up vows for deliverance from the terrors which now I feel. Now mayest thou hear, Apollo our protector, my concealed address. For my speech is not before friends, nor suits it to unfold all to light, while she is close beside me, lest with malice and babbling clamour she circulate an idle tale throughout the town<sup>e</sup>. But hear me thus, for in this form will I address thee. The apparitions of a twofold dream that I have this night beheld<sup>f</sup>, these grant me accomplished, O Lycæan

<sup>d</sup> This is well known to have been a point of great importance among the Greeks. Ulysses, relating the cause of Philoctetes' expulsion from the army, says,

ὅτ' οὔτε λοιβῆς ἡμῖν, οὔτε θυμάτων  
παρῆν ἐκήλους προσθίγειν, ἀλλ' ἀγρίαῖς  
κατεῖχ' αἰὲ πᾶν στρατόπεδον δυσφημίαῖς.

Phil. v. 8.

Hermann, however, takes ἐυφήμου βοῆς to mean merely silence, as in the *Œdipus Coloneus*, v. 132.

<sup>e</sup> Thus Virgil:—

“ ————Hinc spargere voces  
In vulgum ambiguas.”

*Æneid* II.

<sup>f</sup> “ Δισσῶν, *duplicium*, id est, *ambiguorum*. Sic Lucianus in *Alexandro*, p. 218. διττοὺς τινὰς καὶ ἀμφιβόλους καὶ λοξοὺς χρησμοὺς συγγράφων.” Brunck. It may, however, be an allusion to the vision which *Æschylus* has related.



king, if propitious to me they have appeared, but if hostile, let them recoil on my foes. And if any by treachery are plotting to expel me from my present good fortune, permit it not; but grant that I ever living a life thus unharmed, may sway the Atridæ's palace and this sceptre in happy hour consorting with those of my friends, with whom I now consort, and as many of my children, as from whom no ill will attaches to me, nor bitter annoyance. This, O Lycæan Apollo, favourably hearing, grant to all of us, even as we ask: but all the rest, though I be silent, I give thee the credit, as a god, of knowing<sup>s</sup>. For it is likely that the race of Jove sees all things.

ATT. Stranger females, how might I surely know if this be the palace of the king Ægisthus?

CH. This is, O stranger. Thyself hast rightly conjectured.

ATT. And am I right in guessing also that this is his wife? For she is dignified as a sovereign to look on.

CH. Most certainly of all. This is she, here before thee.

ATT. Hail, O queen. I come bringing to thee pleasant tidings, and to Ægisthus alike, from a friend.

CLY. I accept the uttered omen. But first of all I wish to know of thee, who of mankind despatched thee.

ATT. Phanoteus the Phocian: forwarding an important matter.

<sup>s</sup> Similarly the Chorus in *Œdipus Tyrannus* :—

Ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν οὖν Ζεὺς, ὃ τ' Ἀπόλλων  
 Ξυνέτοι, καὶ τὰ βροτῶν  
 εἰδότες.

CLY. Of what kind, stranger? say; for being from a friend, I am well assured thou wilt speak friendly words.

ATT. Orestes is dead: I speak compressing it in brief.

EL. Unhappy me! this day am I undone.

CLY. What sayest thou, what sayest thou, stranger? heed not her.

ATT. Now, as then, I declare that Orestes is dead.

EL. Wretched I am lost. I am no longer aught.

CLY. Look thou to thine own affairs; but do thou, stranger, tell me the truth; in what way perishes he?

ATT. And for this I was sent, and I will tell the whole. For he having come to the glorious pageant of games of Greece<sup>h</sup>, for the sake of Delphian prizes, when he heard the loud announcements of the herald proclaiming previously the race, the decision of which comes first, entered [the lists] illustrious, the admiration of all there present. And having made the goals of the course even with the starting-place<sup>i</sup>, he went

<sup>h</sup> The Pythian games were instituted in honour of Apollo's victory over the serpent Python, and are thought to have been at first confined to a contest of musical and poetic skill in hymning the praises of the victor god. The *δίαυλος* here mentioned was when the competitors in the foot race doubled the goal, and returned to the starting place. The *πένταθλον* is usually supposed to be comprised in the celebrated verse—

*"Ἄλμα, ποδωκείην, δίσκον, ἄκοντα, πάλην.*

The prizes were sacred apples, to which some add wreaths of laurel, or, according to Ovid, of beech. As Pausanias has stated, x. 7. 3. that most of the Pythian rules were adopted from the Olympic games, we find "the order of the course," *δίαυλος*, first here.

<sup>i</sup> See Brunck's note. Hermann's better taste has rejected so epigrammatic a prettiness as that of Antipater; and he justly observes, that Sopho-

forth, carrying the all-honoured prize of victory. And that I may tell thee sparingly amid abundance, I have not known such deeds and might in man. But know at once<sup>k</sup>; of as many double courses as the umpires proclaimed the five prizes which are customary, of these obtaining all the meeds of victory he was hailed blessed, summoned an Argive, by name Orestes, son of Agamemnon, that once assembled the famous armament of Greece. And such were these events. But when any god shall afflict him, not even the strong man could escape. For he on the next day<sup>l</sup>, when at sun-rise there was a swift contest of horsemanship, came in with many a charioteer. One was an Achæan, one from

cles, in saying that Orestes made his starting-place his goal, exactly describes the *δίαυλος*.

<sup>k</sup> Hermann has a comma between *δρόμων* and *διαύλων*, and considers what follows as equivalent to *πεντάθλων ἃ νομίζεται*.

<sup>l</sup> Translators and commentators agree in considering *ἄλλος* here as synonymous with *δεύτερος*; (the Latins have the same idiom, as in Cicero: *unus, alter, tertius*;) but as it is not certain how long the Pythian games lasted, this appears a gratuitous assumption. Certainly Poppo, in his note on Thucyd. III. 59, denies the converse: . . . . "provocat enim ad Pind. Olymp. I. 69. ubi postquam Pelops dictus est a Neptuno raptus atque in Jovis domum traductus esse, subjicitur:

Ἐνθα δευτέρῳ χρόνῳ

ἦλθε καὶ Γανυμήδης.

Quo in loco quum scholiastæ multas turbas movissent, Ganymedem Pelope priorem fuisse dicentes, Heynius *δευτέρῳ χρόνῳ* positum esse voluit pro *ἄλλῳ χρόνῳ*, quod satis refutavit Boeckius, quem vide in Notis Criticis, p. 346. *Δεύτερος* enim nonnisi ibi usurpari potest, ubi de duobus sermo est, ideoque non cum *ἄλλος* sed cum *ἕτερος* cohæret; a quo tamen ita differt, ut *ἕτερος* unum ex duobus significet sine ulla vel temporis vel ordinis sive dignitatis notatione, unde unus ille et prior et posterior esse potest, *δεύτερος* autem nonnisi de posteriore plerumque dicatur:" p. 63.

Sparta, two were Libyans skilled to guide the chariot and its team; and he among them with Thessalian steeds the fifth, the sixth from Ætolia with chestnut fillies, the seventh a Magnesian, the eighth, with white horses, an Ænian by race, the ninth from the god-erected Athens, the other a Bœotian, filling up the tale of ten chariots<sup>m</sup>. But having taken their stand where the appointed umpires had thrown for them with lots, and ranged their chariots, at the sound of the brazen trumpet they started, and all at once in concert cheering on their horses shook the reins in their hands: the whole course within was filled with the noise of rattling chariots<sup>n</sup>: the dust was tossed on high: while all together in confusion were sparing nought of the lash, that each might get beyond the others' wheels<sup>o</sup> and snortings of their steeds, for the breathings of their horses were at once falling upon and covering with foam their backs and the circles of their wheels. But he keeping under the very last column<sup>p</sup>, continually was wheeling in his axle's nave, and giving rein to the right steed, held in the near horse. And hitherto all the chariots continued upright; but then the hard-mouthed steeds of the Ænian run away with him, and

<sup>m</sup> Hence we learn the number allowed to run at the Pythian games at one time.

▪ *Quadrifuges currus*. Brunck. "The harnessed car." Potter. "Ζευ-  
γωτῶν—Hesychius, ξυγώσω—κλείσω." Musgrave.

° *Χνόαι* are properly the sockets into which the axletrees are put.

<sup>p</sup> *ἑσχάτη στήλη* is the last in order of several columns or obelisks erected in the hippodrome, and does not, as some have supposed, allude to the last turn round the goal. See Hermann's dissertation on the words used by the Greeks to express the movements of horses, Beckii Comm. Soc. Phil. vol. i. part i. p. 49, and Bulenger de Circo Rom. c. 29. in Grævius, Thesaur. Ant. Rom. t. 9.

in turning at the completion of the sixth and now on the seventh course<sup>q</sup>, they dash their fronts on the Barcæan car<sup>r</sup>. And thenceforth, from a single mishap, one was crushing and tumbling on another, and the whole Crissæan plain was being filled with the wrecks of shattered chariots. But the skilful charioteer from Athens, aware of this, drives by outside them, and slackens speed, having suffered to pass him the tossing tide of horse and car confounded in the centre. But Orestes was driving the hindmost<sup>s</sup>, indeed, but, as having inferior coursers, placing his trust in the issue. But the other when he saw him left alone<sup>t</sup>, having cracked in the ears of his swift mares the shrill sound of his whip, pursues him; and having brought their poles in line they were driving, now one, and then the other, pushing forward the heads of their chariot horses. And all the other courses in safety the hapless youth drove erect in his car upright; but then, slackening the left rein of his wheeling horse, he unawares strikes the pillar's edge<sup>u</sup>, and breaks the middle axle-nave, is

<sup>q</sup> Hermann understands ἵπποι here, agreeing with the masculine τελοῦντες.

<sup>r</sup> This is an anachronism. V. Herod. iv. 160.

<sup>s</sup> Monk translates this, "Now Orestes drove the last to be sure, but keeping his horses back, as he placed his confidence in the end of the race."

<sup>t</sup> "The scholiasts do not state whom they understand to be meant by ὃ δὲ and νῦν respectively. Later interpreters refer the former to Orestes, the latter to the Athenian: but in that case one would have expected ἐκείνον rather than νῦν, which last must apply to the principal subject of discourse; and that subject is Orestes." Herm.

<sup>u</sup> As his other instructions agree with the plan pursued by Orestes, so this is the accident against which Nestor particularly warns Antilochus, Il. xxiii. v. 334.

tumbled from his chariot, and entangled in his reins, while on his falling to the ground his steeds were dispersed over the middle of the course. But the host, when it perceives him thrown out of his seat, shrieked aloud over the youth, that, after having done such deeds, he meets with such a disaster, whirled along on the ground, and then again tossing up his limbs to heaven: until the charioteers having with difficulty stopped the horses' speed, released him, all bloody, so that none of his friends by looking on him could have recognized his hapless person. And having forthwith burnt him on the pyre, in a little brazen urn a huge body of melancholy ashes<sup>x</sup> are appointed men of Phocis bringing, that he may inherit a tomb in his father's land. Such, look you, are these tidings, as in story told<sup>y</sup>, piteous, but to us eyewitnesses that saw it, the greatest of all misfortunes that I ever beheld.

CH. Alas! alas! It seems then the whole race of mine ancient lords is from its very roots withered away.

CLY. O Jove, whether shall I call these news fortunate? or terrible, yet gainful? yet 'tis a painful case, if by mine own ills I save my life.

ATT. But why, lady, art thou so dispirited at my present words?

CLY. 'Tis a dreadful thing to be a mother; for not even to the ill-treated does hatred of those she has borne attach.

<sup>x</sup> Thus Hermann, rejecting both Brunck's idea of antiptosis and Schaefer's construction of χαλκῷ σποδοῦ.

<sup>y</sup> Similarly the messenger in *Cædipus Tyrannus*, v. 1237.

τῶν δὲ πραχθέντων τὰ μὲν  
ἄλγιστ' ἄπεισιν· ἡ γὰρ ὄψις οὐ πάρα.

ATT. It seems then we are come in vain.

CLY. No, believe me, not in vain at least: for how couldst thou tell me in vain? if thou camest possessing sure proofs of his death, who born of my life, an alien from my breast and nurture, estranged himself in exile, and since he quitted this land never beheld me, but laying to my charge his father's murder, was ever threatening to perform dreadful deeds, so that neither by night nor by day did gentle sleep overshadow me; but progressing time ever led me on as doomed to die. Now, however, (for on this day am I released from alarm at her hands and his, since she the greater pest was living with me, ever drinking up my pure life's blood,) now haply shall I pass my days in quiet, as far as relates to her threats<sup>2</sup>.

EL. Ah me, unhappy! For now 'tis mine to wail, Orestes, thy misfortune, that thus conditioned thou art insulted by this thy mother: is this well?

CLY. Not with thee, be sure; but he, as he is, is well.

EL. Hear, avenging spirit of the lately dead<sup>3</sup>.

CLY. It hath heard whom it ought, and well fulfilled the prayer.

EL. Be insolent; for now thy lot is prosperity.

CLY. So shall not Orestes and thou repress it.

<sup>2</sup> "Male Brunckius δ' post νῦν delevit, quod repeti post parenthesin notavi ad Vigerum, p. 847. Compare Æsch. Choeph. 621—629." Herm.

<sup>3</sup> Nemesis, daughter of Nox, and by some supposed to be the same with Leda, was intrusted with the care of avenging all manner of impieties, but especially those committed against the dead. It was in this latter character that Adrastus, in his second expedition to Thebes, to avenge the refusal of burial to his son-in-law Polynices, erected a temple to her. The Greeks also celebrated a feast in her honour, called Nemesia.

EL. We have been put down ourselves, no fear that we shall put thee down.

CLY. Thou wouldst become deserving of abundant reward, stranger, hadst thou checked her babbling clamour<sup>b</sup>.

ATT. I would be gone then, if this be well.

CLY. By no means: since thou wouldst be about to act in a manner worthy neither me nor the foreign friend that sent thee. But go ye within, and leave her to lament from without both her own and her friend's calamities.

EL. And does the wretched woman seem to you, as in grief and pain, bitterly to weep and wail over her son thus perished? No, in derision is she gone. O unhappy me! Dearest Orestes, how by thy death hast thou undone me? for thou art gone, and hast torn from my heart the only hope that yet remained to me, that thou wouldst one day come a living avenger of my father and of me ill fated. But now whither must I go? for I am lonely, bereft of both thee and my father. Now must I again slave to those among men most hateful to me, the murderers of my sire. And is this well with me? But no, never again hereafter will I be their co-mate<sup>c</sup>, but at this gate having thrown myself along, friendless will I wither away life. Wherefore, let any of those within slay me, if he be offended; since

<sup>b</sup> Hermann refers to Matth. Gr. Gr. § 524. for the construction of this passage, defending the common reading against Monk. Mus. Crit.

<sup>c</sup> Brunck's reading *ἔσομαι* is an elision unknown to the tragic dialogue. *ξύνουκος ἔσομαι* may be read, according to Hermann, with an hiatus: he himself reads *ἔσειμ'*; Monk and others, *ἔσομαι ξύνουκος*. "*Sed transponendi ratio hodie est instar acuti cultri in manibus puerorum*. Herm.



'tis pleasure if I die, pain if I live ; and for life I have no wish. Where can be the thunderbolts of Jove<sup>d</sup>, or where the beaming sun, if looking on these things they silently hide<sup>e</sup>? O! O! alas! alas!

CH. My child, why weepest thou?

EL. Alas!

CH. Sorrow not too violently.

EL. Thou wilt kill me.

CH. How?

EL. If thou shalt suggest a hope for those who have manifestly sunk into the grave, thou wilt the rather trample on me wasting away.

CH. I did it, for that I know that royal Amphiaraus was ensnared by stealth in the golden-wreathed fetters of a woman<sup>f</sup>, and now beneath the earth——

EL. Oh! alas! alas!

<sup>d</sup> “These four lines must be restored to the Chorus, whose claim to them is irrefragable. They insinuate a ground of hope for Electra, to which she alludes in v. 833. The exclamations in v. 827. are Electra's.” Mus. Crit. i. 204.

<sup>e</sup> “Ἐφορῶντες. Locus postulat verbum cujus sensus fuerit *intuentes, aspicientes*, i. e. ἑσορῶντες, non ἔφορῶντες.” Musgrave. But this word is with peculiar fitness applied to the sun:—

Δεινοῦ γὰρ θεοῦ αἶδε βόες καὶ ἴφια μῆλα,  
'Ἡελίου, ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούει.

Od. xii. 322.

<sup>f</sup> The story of Amphiaraus bears a resemblance to that of Agamemnon. He was son of Oicleus, and the greatest soothsayer of his time. Foreseeing the fatal issue of the Theban war, he would have declined assisting Polynices, and hid himself for some time, but was betrayed by his wife Eriphyle, whom Polynices had bribed with a golden necklace, and who, like Clytemnestra, fell by her son's hand. Although Homer has assigned the chief place among deceased prophets to Tiresias, it is certain that high honours were paid to Amphiaraus after death, at Oropus in Attica, where he had a temple.

CH. Immortal he reigns.

EL. Alas!

CH. Alas indeed! for she was deathful.

EL. Was she over-mastered?

CH. Yes.

EL. I know it, I know it; for a careful friend arose to him in sorrow; but to me there is no longer any, for he who yet existed, is torn away and gone.

CH. Of wretches most wretched art thou.

EL. I too am conscious, too conscious, of this, by a life which every month sweeps in a mass of many things grievous and detestable<sup>g</sup>.

CH. We know all that thou bewailest.

EL. No more, no more now mislead me, where no more<sup>h</sup>——

CH. What sayest thou?

EL. Are present the aids of hopes of kindred blood and high ancestry<sup>i</sup>.

CH. Death is natural to all mankind.

EL. What, and in the rivalry of swift steeds thus to be entangled in the reins, like him wretched?

CH. The misfortune is inconceivable.

EL. How should it not? if in a foreign land without my hands——

CH. O heavens!

<sup>g</sup> If Hermann's reading, αἰῶνι, be here adopted for ἀχέων, (as παμμήνην πανούργην cannot well stand for substantives if without the article,) the reader may compare Hermann's explanation, πάνσυρτος πᾶσι μῆσι, with Thucyd. 2. 44. ἐνευδαίμονῃσαι τε καὶ ἐντελευτῆσαι τὸν βίον.

<sup>h</sup> Johnson, and after him Brunck, unaccountably translates the word παραγάγης bý soleris, to which Musgrave with reason objects, and renders it *demulceas verbis, decipias*.

<sup>i</sup> ἀρωγαί Hermann, from the scholiast.

EL. He was inurned, having met with neither sepulture nor dirge from us.

CHR. With joy, my best beloved, I speed me hither<sup>k</sup>, dismissing decorum, to hasten with alacrity; for I bring both joys and respite from the ills which before now thou didst cherish and sigh over.

EL. But whence couldst thou discover a consolation of my troubles, a remedy whereof it is impossible to find?

CHR. Our Orestes is at hand, be sure of this, hearing it of me, as certainly as thou lookest on me.

EL. What art thou frantic, wretch, and mockest thine own woes and mine?

CHR. No, by my father's hearth, I speak not this in insult, but that he is at hand to us.

EL. Ah me! unhappy! and from whom of men hearing this tale, believest thou thus fondly?

CHR. From myself and none else, having seen sure proofs, I believe this tale.

EL. What proof having beheld, unhappy girl! looking on what, say, art thou heated with this fever of the soul past cure<sup>l</sup>?

CHR. Now, by the gods, listen, that having learnt of me, thou mayest call me henceforth either sensible or senseless.

EL. Nay then, do thou say on, if thou in speaking hast any pleasure.

<sup>k</sup> Much of the beauty of this scene is lost to us in the closet; on the stage its effect must have been wonderful.

<sup>l</sup> The same epithet is applied to the madness of Ajax:—

“Ἐγὼ σφ’ ἀπείργω, δυσφόρους ἐπ’ ὄμμασι  
Γνώμας βαλοῦσα, τῆς ἀνηκίστου χαρᾶς.”

CHR. Well then, I tell thee all that I beheld. For when I came to my father's ancient tomb, I see from the top of the mound fresh-running streams of milk, and my sire's grave garlanded all around with every flower that grows. But having seen this I began to feel wonder, and gaze around, lest haply any mortal be stealing close upon me. But when I saw the whole spot tranquil, I crept nearer the tomb, and at the edge of the pile I discern a fresh cropped lock of hair<sup>m</sup>. And the instant I hapless discovered it, an accustomed fancy strikes upon my soul, that I was looking on this a memorial of Orestes, the dearest of mankind, and raising it in my hands, I speak not words of ill omen, but for joy have mine eyes filled instantly with tears<sup>n</sup>. And now too equally as then I am sure that this ornament could come from none but him. For to whom is this a natural duty, save at least to thee and me? And I did it not, this I well know, nor again didst thou. For how shouldst thou, to whom at least it is not permitted with impunity to quit this roof even to

<sup>m</sup> Schaefer conjectured *πυρῶ*. Retain the genitive and join it with *ὀρῶ*, a *summo tumulo conspicio cincinnum*, according to the Greek fashion of measurement, not from the spectator to the object seen, but the reverse. See also v. 882. Herm.

<sup>n</sup> Brunck translates this, *vocem quidem compressi*, evidently considering *οὐ δύσφημῶ* as equivalent to *εὐφημῶ* in its second sense. But Potter with greater reason gives it thus:—

“And from mine eyes gushed tears: account not these  
Omens of ill, for they were tears of joy.”

Chrysothemis, with the natural anxiety of a Greek bringing good tidings, explains away a circumstance which might change their nature, even before she states what that circumstance was. But that it was considered in general of ill omen, we learn from Homer, Od. B. XX.

[worship] the gods? But of my mother too neither is the spirit wont to act thus, nor had she done it unobserved: no, these marks of respect are from Orestes. Come, my dear sister, take courage. To the same persons the selfsame genius is not always present. But ours was ere now detestable, yet haply the present day will be the confirmation of many a blessing.

EL. Alas! how do I long since pity thee for thine infatuation!

CHR. But what is it? do I not speak this to thy delight?

EL. Thou knowest neither whither on earth nor whither in thought thou art hurried.

CHR. But how know I not that at least, which I saw plainly?

EL. He is dead, miserable woman; and all protection to thee from him is vanished; look not to him at least.

CHR. Unhappy me! from whom of men hast thou heard this?

EL. From one who was near at hand when he perished.

CHR. And where is this man? amazement comes over me.

EL. Within, acceptable, and not displeasing to my mother.

CHR. Unhappy me! and from whom among men could have been the many funeral offerings at my father's tomb?

EL. I am most led to believe that some one placed them there as memorials of the deceased Orestes.

CHR. Ah ill-fortuned! while with joy I bringing

such a tale was hastening, not knowing, I am sure, in what woe we were plunged<sup>o</sup>! But now, when I have come, I find the previously existing evils, and fresh ones also.

EL. Thus it is with thee; but if thou wilt be persuaded by me, thou shalt lighten the weight of thy present affliction.

CHR. What, shall I ever raise the dead?

EL. That at least is not what I said, for I was not born so senseless.

CHR. What then dost thou require, to which I can pledge myself?

EL. That thou take heart to execute what I shall advise.

CHR. Nay, if there be any profit in it at least, I will not reject it from me.

EL. Observe, without trouble, be sure, is nought successful.

CHR. I do observe. I will lend aid in all whereunto I have strength.

EL. Hear then now, in what way I have planned to effect it. Thou too art surely aware that present countenance of friends there is none to us, but hades has taken and deprived us of them, and we are left alone<sup>p</sup>. I at least, while I heard that my brother was alive and flourishing, maintained hopes, that he would one day

<sup>o</sup> "Αρα est ergo, quod hic in media oratione cum dolore additum. Herm. ad Aj. 1005.

<sup>p</sup> Hermann here defends the first person dual against Elmsley and Monk: it is found once only in Homer, Il. Ψ. 485. where Elmsley proposed to read *περιδώμεσθ'*, once besides this place in Sophocles, at Phil. 1079, where also Hermann has retained the dual.—

"Observe, Ægistho, non etiam matri, necem parare Electram." H.

come as avenger of my father's murder<sup>q</sup>; but now he is no more, I naturally turn to thee, that with me thy sister thou wilt not be reluctant to slay the perpetrator of our father's murder, Ægisthus. For I must conceal nought from thee any longer. Since how long wilt thou continue slothful? with a view to what further rational hope? who hast cause to sigh for the deprivation of the possessing thy sire's wealth, and cause to sorrow, so long a time declining in years unwedded and unbetrothed. For Ægisthus is not so imprudent a man, as ever to suffer thy progeny or mine to spring up, an evident annoyance to himself<sup>r</sup>. But if thou be induced by my counsels, first thou wilt reap the praise of piety from thy father in the grave, and also from thy brother, and then as thou wast born, thou wilt be called hereafter free, and wilt gain thyself a worthy marriage. For every one is wont to have regard to what is virtuous. But in the report at least seest thou not what high renown thou wilt attach to thyself and to me by being persuaded by me? For who of townsmen or strangers beholding us will not welcome us with applauses such as these? "Behold, friends, these two sisters, that saved their father's house, that of their lives unsparing, took the lead in slaying their foes who once were high in station; these ought we to love, these all to venerate, these all to honour, both at the festivals

<sup>q</sup> Πράκτωρ is properly the exactor of retribution.

<sup>r</sup> Thuc. III. 40. Μάλιστα δὲ οἱ μὴ ξὺν προφάσει τινὰ κακῶς ποιοῦντες ἐπεξίρχονται καὶ διόλλυνται, τὸν κίνδυνον ὑφορώμενοι τοῦ ὑπολειπομένου ἔχθρον. "Non putem respexisse Sophoclem versum paræmiacum νήπιος ὅς πατέρα κτείνας παῖδας καταλείποι, ut Schæfero videbatur in Melet. Crit. p. 123." Herm.

and in the states' popular assemblies, in reward of their courage<sup>s</sup>." Thus, be sure, will every man proclaim of us, that glory shall fail us not, alive or dead. But, my beloved, be persuaded, join in toiling for thy father's sake, in labouring for thy brother's, respite me from misery, respite thyself, being assured of this, that "basely to live is base for the nobly born."

CH. In words like these precaution is of service both to the speaker and hearer.

CHR. Yet before she spake, ladies, had she chanced to be other than perverse of thought, she had preserved that caution, even as she doth not preserve it. For whither possibly turning thine eyes, art thou at once arming thyself with such daring, and callest on me to support thee? Seest thou not? thou wert born a woman, and no man, and art in power less strong than thine opponents. But to them is destiny daily propitious, while to us it is retrograde, and comes to nought<sup>t</sup>. Who then, plotting to ensnare such a man, shall be let

<sup>s</sup> "Notwithstanding the decent reservedness of female manners in ancient Greece, the virgins were not only allowed to be present at certain religious solemnities, but their attendance was necessary: they formed a distinguished part in the sacred processions, and were led by some virgin of the highest rank." Potter. In Spain, where the strictness of female confinement outdoes even that of ancient Greece, the same licence is allowed on the festivals of particular saints.

<sup>t</sup> The dæmon, which in Socrates supplied the office of common sense, was considered by the ancients as a being of an intermediate order between God and man; being synonymous with the genii, (perhaps originally with the giants,) and therefore sprung from earth (γῆ) previously to the creation of man: they were supposed to control by their influence the fortunes of the human race, each of which had his particular guardian power, who knew (Δαίμων) all his actions, and furthered or prevented his purposes. From this probably was modified the Rosicrucian system.



off unpained by calamity? Beware lest faring badly we work ourselves weightier evils, if any one shall hear these words. For it neither profits nor assists us aught, having gained an honourable fame to perish with infamy; for 'tis not death that is most hateful, but when one longing to die then have not power to obtain it. But, I conjure thee, ere we perish utterly in complete destruction, and desolate our race, repress thy passion. And what has been said I will preserve for thee, undivulged as ineffectual; but do thou thyself at least after so long a time take thought, since thou hast no power, to submit to thy superiors<sup>u</sup>.

CH. Be persuaded. There exists not to man a profit more desirable to gain than forethought and wisdom of mind.

EL. Thou hast said nothing unlooked for; nay, I well knew thou wouldst reject what I proposed. But by me alone and single-handed must this deed be done; for positively I will not leave it unassayed at least.

CHR. Alas! would thou had been such in spirit, when our father fell: for thou wouldst have accomplished all.

EL. Nay I was naturally at least such, but at that time of weaker judgment.

CHR. Practise to continue such in mind throughout life.

EL. As not purposing to cooperate with me thou advisest thus.

<sup>u</sup> 'Αλλ' ἐννοεῖν χρὴ τοῦτο μὲν, γυναῖχ' ὅτι  
 "Εφυμεν, ὡς πρὸς ἀνδρας οὐ μαχουμένα·  
 "Επειτα δ' οὐνεκ' ἀρχόμεσθ' ἐκ κρείσσονων.

CHR. Yes, for it is likely that one who takes in hand to work ill, will fare ill.

EL. I envy thee thy prudence, but abhor thy cowardice.

CHR. I will endure to hear this; there will come a time when thou wilt commend me<sup>x</sup>.

EL. But think not from me at least thou shalt ever meet with this.

CHR. Nay, future time is long enough to decide on this.

EL. Away, for there is in thee no help.

CHR. There is; but thou hast not docility to learn it.

EL. Go and disclose all this to thy mother.

CHR. Nay, I hate thee not with so great hatred.

EL. Well then, think at least to what infamy thou art leading me<sup>y</sup>.

CHR. Not infamy, but forethought for thyself.

EL. What, must I then follow thine idea of justice?

CHR. Yes, for when thou art in thy right mind, then shalt thou lead me.

EL. Truly 'tis hard, that one who speaks so well should err.

CHR. Thou hast rightly stated the evil in which thou art implicated.

<sup>x</sup> Schol. *ἔσται καιρὸς, ὅτε με εὐφημήσεις*. Potter makes the sentence break off abruptly, which seems contrary to the practice of the Greek poets, the connection being nowhere afterwards resumed. Hermann translates it thus, "oportebit me audire te etiam laudantem mores meos." Monk, "sustinebo te audire, etiamsi mutas orationem et probas mores meos."

<sup>y</sup> But Hermann, "Referuntur hæc ad præcedentia ut plena oratio sit, ἀλλ' οὖν ἐπίστω γ' ἐχθαίρουσα, οἳ μ' ἀτιμίας ἄγεις: at sane te scias me odisse pro eo gradu contemptus, ad quem usque me despicias. Brunck's explanation he terms all but unintelligible.

EL. But how? do I not seem to thee to say this with justice?

CHR. Yet there are cases where justice causes injury.

EL. By these rules I choose not to live.

CHR. Yet if thou shalt so act, thou wilt commend me<sup>2</sup>.

EL. Yet will I do it at all events, no ways frightened by thee.

CHR. And is this certain, and wilt thou not re-deliberate?

EL. No, for nothing is more detestable than base deliberation.

CHR. Methinks thou givest not a thought to aught I say.

EL. Long since, and not lately, hath this been resolved on by me.

CHR. Then I will be gone, for neither canst thou endure to approve of my words, nor I of thy conduct.

EL. But go in. For think not I shall ever follow thee, not even if thou chancedst to be very desirous, since even the pursuit of shadows is the part of great folly.

CHR. But if haply thou seemest to thyself to possess any sense, possess it thus; for when now thou shalt have set thy foot into troubles, thou wilt approve of my words.

CH. Why, beholding the birds of air, most feeling,

<sup>2</sup> That is, "having made the attempt you intend, in the hour of punishment (or failure) you will too late commend my prudence in declining to aid you." That this meaning must be given to the sentence is evident from Electra's answer. See also v. 1056.

busied in providing support for both those from whom they have sprung, and those from whom they have derived benefit, do we not equally practise this<sup>a</sup>? But no, by Jove and heavenly Themis, long will they not be unpunished<sup>b</sup>. O rumour of mankind that piercest earth, echo for me downwards a lamentable cry to the Atridæ beneath, fraught with joyless disgrace: that now their domestic affairs are distempered, and that as concerns their children, a discordant strife is now an overmatch for affectionate intercourse<sup>c</sup>. But abandoned, alone, sad Electra is agitated, ever sighing for a father, like the all-sorrowing nightingale, now utterly careless of death, nay, ready to quit the light, when she has destroyed the twin Fury. Who ever so noble could have arisen<sup>d</sup>? No high-born spirit, in adversity, is

<sup>a</sup> Alluding to the filial affection of the stork, and that bird only, as is evident from the Birds of Aristophanes:—

Ἄλλ' ἔστιν ἡμῖν τοῖσιν ὄρνισιν νόμος  
 Παλαῖος, ἐν τοῖς τῶν πελαργῶν κύρβειν·  
 ἐπὴν ὁ πατὴρ ὁ πελαργὸς ἐκπετησίμους  
 πάντας ποιήσῃ τοὺς πελαργιδεῖς τρέφων,  
 δεῖ τοὺς νεοττοὺς τὸν πατέρα πάλιν τρέφειν.

Avv. v. 1353.

The rest of the feathered race are represented as killing their parents, which circumstance indeed brings the parricide to clouduckooburgh.

<sup>b</sup> “ Quod Monkio placet, hoc diei scilicet at punientur liberi qui hoc officium negligunt, id quum propter gravem illam Jovis et Themidis obtestationem, quæ frigida foret in tali sententia, non est verisimile, tum etiam propter δαρὸν, quod nisi ad Ægisthum et Clytemnestram spectaret, plane esset supervacaneum.” Herm.

<sup>c</sup> Or, if the middle form be taken actively, it may be translated, “ no longer places them on equal footing in amicable society.”

<sup>d</sup> “ Camerarius sic vertit. In taline fortunâ florere queat ulla paternæ nobilitatis conscia? Pari fere sensu Johnsonus: Quis bonis prognatus sic vivere sustineat? Mihi versus enthusiastice a Choro proferri videtur, magnani-

willing nameless to debase its high renown, my child, my child, even as thou hast adopted a vile life of utter misery, warring down the dishonourable, to reap two benefits in one word, the reputation of being both wise and the best of children<sup>e</sup>. I pray thou mayest live in might and opulence as much superior to thy foes as now thou dwellest beneath their hands; since I have found thee not indeed moving in a prosperous station, but observing the most excellent of those laws which flourish the highest, by thy piety to Jove.

OR. Have we, ladies, been rightly informed, and are we rightly journeying whither we desire?

CH. But what dost thou enquire of us, and with what wish art thou here?

OR. Long since am I asking for Ægisthus, where he dwells.

CH. Nay then, both rightly art thou come, and thy informant is blameless.

OR. Who of you then would announce to those within the wished for presence of our common feet<sup>f</sup>?

CH. She will, if at least it befits the nearest relative to herald this.

mitatem Electræ miranti: *Quis unquam adeo generosa extitit.*" Musgrave.

"When shall such hero live again?" Giaour.

<sup>e</sup> "Ita tu quoque illætabile commune fatum prætulisti, scelus armans, ut dupplicem ferres laudem, simulque et sapiens et optima filia dicerere. Armare enim quum dicitur Electra scelus, id patet idem esse ac provocare ad dimicationem, cujus incertus est eventus, unde mortem illa præoptâsse dicitur." Herm.

<sup>f</sup> See v. 1357. upon which Franklin has the following note: "The expression in the original is remarkable, ἡδίστον ἔχων ποδῶν ὑπηρέτημα, dulcissimum habens pedum ministerium; not unlike that of the prophet Isaiah: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings!"

OR. Go, lady, within, and signify that certain men from Phocis are in quest of Ægisthus.

EL. Ah unhappy me! surely they can never [be here] bringing evident proofs of the report which we have heard?

OR. I know not the rumour thou hintest at, but the aged Strophius bade me bring tidings concerning Orestes.

EL. But what is it, stranger? How fear steals upon me!

OR. Bringing them in a narrow urn, we, as thou seest, convey the poor remains of him dead.

EL. Unhappy me! this then is that now certain: it seems, I see my sorrow manifested.

OR. If at all thou weepest for Orestes' ill, know that this vase encloses his remains.

EL. O stranger, give it me now, if truly this vessel enshrines him, to hold in my hands, that I may weep and lament myself and my whole race at once together with these ashes.

OR. Bring it forward and give it her, whoever she is; for not as in enmity at least to him she requests this, but being either some friend or by birth akin.

EL. O monument of him among mankind dearest to me<sup>g</sup>, relic of the living Orestes, with hopes how changed from those wherewith I once sent thee forth, do I receive thee back! For now I bear thee in my hands,

<sup>g</sup> Aulus Gellius, 7. 5. relates of Polus, a distinguished Athenian actor, already mentioned in a note at the beginning of the *Œdipus Tyrannus*, that not long before the acting of this play he had lost a much loved and only son. Having to perform in the character of Electra, he brought his son's urn and ashes from their sepulchre on the stage, and thus turned a counterfeit into a real passion. Herm.

a nothing; but from thy home, my boy, I sent thee blooming forth. How would I that I had quitted life, ere with these hands having stolen, I dismissed thee to a foreign land, and rescued thee from murder, that thou on that day hadst lain a corpse, and shared a common portion of his tomb with thy father! But now, far from thine home, and in a foreign land an exile, miserably hast thou perished, thy sister elsewhere; nor with affectionate hands have I prepared the bath for thee<sup>h</sup>, nor from the all-consuming pyre borne away, as fitting, the hapless burden. No, but by stranger hands thou hapless cared for, art come a little freight in a little urn. Woe is me unhappy for my nurture of yore, unprofitable! wherein I oft engaged for thee with pleasing toil; for never wert thou dearer to thy mother than to me; nor were they within, but I, thy nurse, yes, I as sister was ever accosted by thee. But now hath all this vanished in a single day, with thee no more; yes, all hast thou with thee swept, and like a hurricane art passed away. My father is departed, I with thee am fallen—thyself art dead and gone: but our foes laugh; and our unmothered<sup>i</sup> mother is

<sup>h</sup> “The custom of washing the bodies of the dead is very ancient. This office was always performed by the nearest relations: Socrates, as we are informed by Plato, washed himself before his execution, probably to prevent its being done by strangers: Alcestis likewise in Euripides, after she had determined to die for her husband, washes herself. The Romans adopted this custom from the Greeks; and we find the mother of Euryalus making the same complaint as Electra,—

—————Nec te tua funera mater  
Produxī, pressive oculos, aut vulnera lavi.

Virg. *Æn.* IX.”—Franklin.

<sup>i</sup> The general analogy of language, and the use of similar words by the

frantic with delight; on whom thou oftentimes wouldst send me word in secret that thou wert on the point thyself to come an avenger. But this thine and my luckless destiny hath wrested from us, which hath sent thee to me thus, in place of a form most dear, ashes and unavailing shadow. Ah me, ah me! O piteous corpse! alas! alas! O best beloved, brought on thy way most dreadful, ah me! me! how hast thou undone me, indeed undone me, mine own brother! Wherefore admit thou me into this thy mansion, me a nothing, to a nothing, that with thee in the grave I may henceforward dwell; for as, when thou wert on earth, with thee I shared an equal fortune, so now in death I long not to fail of [sharing] thy tomb; for I see not that the dead are pained<sup>k</sup>.

CH. Thou art begotten of a mortal father, Electra, reflect; and mortal is Orestes, wherefore sigh not too deeply, for to all to suffer this is owing.

OR. Alas! alas! what shall I say? whither, at a loss

best authors (as of "unfathered, unkinged," by Shakespeare, and "unchilded," in a sense corresponding to that of the Greek word here by bishop Hall) will, it is hoped, excuse this expression, though the translator is not prepared to adduce any passage in its support. To those who think this too great a liberty, the translation of Savage in his finest poem, "O mother, yet no mother!" will be an acceptable refuge from Franklin's or Potter's.

<sup>k</sup> Brunck translates this "*mortuos enim dolore confictari non video.*" Franklin, "the dead are free from sorrows." Potter,

" ————— The dead are free

From all the various woes of mortal life."

The two latter did not, it appears, consider it as any thing more than a general sentiment. The translator is rather inclined to suppose it a reproach, though "clerkly couched," to the shade of Agamemnon, the ebullition of despair at the neglect of all her prayers and the frustration of all her hopes.



for words, shall I betake me<sup>1</sup>? For control my tongue can I no longer.

EL. But what grief didst thou feel? wherefore happens it thou sayest this?

OR. Is this of thine the glorious person of Electra?

EL. This is that person, and in most woeful plight.

OR. Then woe is me for this sad mischance.

EL. Wherefore, stranger, can it be, that thou thus sighest over me?

OR. O form, in disgraceful and unholy sort impaired!

EL. It can be none else but me, surely, O stranger, that thou deplorest.

OR. Alas for thy marriageless and ill-fated life!

EL. For what possible reason, stranger, canst thou thus gazing on me be mourning?

OR. How truly nothing had I known of my miseries?

EL. In what that has been spoken hast thou discerned this?

OR. Beholding thee conspicuous for thy many griefs.

EL. And yet thou seest at least but few of mine ills.

OR. And how could there ever exist more hateful than these to look on?

EL. For that I am an inmate with the assassins.

<sup>1</sup> “*Ἀμχανῶν*” Malim sic, ut sit participium, vulgo *ἀμχανῶν* ab *ἀμήχανος*.” Musgrave. Which Brunck confirms (see his note) on authority. “Bene, mea sententia, modo ne pravam interpunctionem adjecisset. Nam, ut recte monet Monkus, *ποῖ λόγων* jungenda sunt, qui tamen addere debebat ad eundem genitivum etiam participium *ἀμχανῶν* referendum esse.” Herm.

OR. With whose? Whence hast thou indicated this evil<sup>m</sup>?

EL. My father's. Nay more, to them perforce I slave.

OR. Why, who of mankind impels thee forward to this necessity<sup>n</sup>?

EL. My mother she is called; but with a mother hath nought in common.

OR. Perpetrating what? with violence, or with penury of living?

EL. With violence, with penury, with every ill.

OR. And is there none at hand who will aid thee, and prevent her?

EL. None indeed. For him whom I had, hast thou brought hither in ashes.

OR. Ah hapless! how long since beholding do I pity thee!

EL. Know that of mankind thou alone hast compassionated me now at last.

OR. Yes, for I alone come in pain for thy woes.

EL. Thou surely art not come from some quarter akin to me?

OR. I would tell thee, if the presence of these be friendly.

EL. It is friendly, so that thou wilt speak before the trusty.

<sup>m</sup> Or rather, perhaps, "whence this evil, at which thou hast hinted?"

<sup>n</sup> Hermann somewhat differently: "*ἀνάγκη τῇδε* non est dativus, idem significans quod *εἰς ἀνάγκην τήνδε*, sed ablativus: *Quis te mortalium hac serviendi necessitate cogit?* Quod exquisitius dictum pro, *quis tibi hanc necessitatem imponit?* *Ἀνάγκη προτρέπει* idem est quod *ἀναγκάζει*: et quum *ταῦτα* dicere deberet, pronomen ad nomen *ἀνάγκη* accommodavit, ut solent."

OR. Give up this urn now,<sup>1</sup> that thou mayest learn the whole.

EL. Nay truly, by the gods, deal not thus with me, stranger.

OR. Be persuaded as I say, and then never wilt thou err.

EL. Now, as thou art a man<sup>o</sup>, bereave me not of what I hold most dear.

OR. I cannot consent to let thee.

EL. Ah me unhappy for thee, Orestes, if I am to be deprived of thy tomb!

OR. Speak auspiciously, for not with reason dost thou mourn.

EL. How mourn I not with reason my dead brother?

OR. It suits thee not with these words to accost him<sup>p</sup>.

EL. Am I thus unworthy of the dead?

OR. Unworthy thou of none. But this is not thy part.

EL. [It is] if at least this that I bear is the body of Orestes.

OR. It is not Orestes', except in tale at least worked up.

<sup>o</sup> Literally, "by thy beard." This was a frequent adjuration among the ancients, as the beard was an object of great care, and the loss of them esteemed a great disgrace, as in the case of David's messengers to Hanun. In the Arabian Nights there is a proclamation in which the loss of the beard is a threatened penalty for failing to expound certain difficulties.

<sup>p</sup> Potter translates this, "Thy state it suits not thus to speak." Brunck, "*Non te decet ista loqui.*" But the word *προσφωνεῖν* seems to require that its preposition be more fully marked, besides that it makes the discovery more gradual, which is clearly Orestes' aim.

EL. But where is the tomb of him unhappy?

OR. It is not. For the living has no tomb.

EL. How hast thou said, young man?

OR. Nought that I say is falsehood.

EL. What, and does he live?

OR. If at least I am alive.

EL. How, art thou he?

OR. Having inspected this my father's seal<sup>9</sup>, ascertain if I speak truth.

EL. O day most welcome!

OR. Most welcome, I join to witness.

EL. O voice, art thou come?

OR. No more enquire elsewhere.

EL. Hold I thee in my hands?

OR. So mayest thou ever henceforth hold me<sup>r</sup>.

EL. My dearest friends, my countrywomen, ye see Orestes here, in artifice deceased, but now by artifice preserved.

CH. We see, my child, and at thy fortune the tear of gladness steals from mine eyes.

EL. O offspring, offspring of persons to me most dear, at length art thou come! thou hast found, thou

<sup>9</sup> "What this mark was, has greatly puzzled the commentators. The scholiasts, whose conjectures are generally whimsical, will needs have it to be some remains of the ivory shoulder (vid. Pind. Olymp. I.) of Pelops, which was visible in all his descendants, as those of Cadmus were marked with a lance, and the Seleucidæ with an anchor. Camerarius, and after him Brumoy, call it a ring or seal, which indeed is the most natural interpretation of the Greek word σφραγίς: though it may be said, in support of the other opinion, that the natural or bodily mark was more certain, and therefore a better proof of identity in regard to the person of Orestes." Franklin.

<sup>r</sup> Hermann, however, for ὦς reads ὤς.

hast approached, thou hast looked on those thou didst desire.

OR. We are here. But tarry, keeping silence.

EL. But wherefore this?

OR. Better be silent, lest one from within hear us.

EL. But no, by the ever virgin Diana, this will I never deign, to dread the superfluous load of women that ever abides within<sup>s</sup>.

OR. Yet see now at least, how even in women war-like daring exists: thou surely having experienced this knowest it full well.

EL. Alas! alas! thou hast introduced unclouded a calamity never to be remedied, never to be forgotten, such as was ours<sup>t</sup>.

OR. I know this also. But when occasion shall prompt, then must we call to mind these deeds.

EL. All times<sup>u</sup>, every time were to me fitting as it passed to denounce with justice this: for scarcely now have I freedom of speech.

OR. I too agree with thee, wherefore keep this in mind.

EL. By doing what?

OR. Where it is unseasonable, wish not to speak at length.

EL. Who then, when thou hast appeared, would

<sup>s</sup> "Sensus est, hanc quidem non dignam habeo quam metuum Clytemnestræ nimiam semper severitatem." Herm. Let the reader choose.

<sup>t</sup> ἀνέφελον ἐπέβαλες are to be construed together. λησόμενον passively.

<sup>u</sup> Thus in Philoctetes, when Neoptolemus says he will sail on the first favourable breeze, but that the wind is then adverse to them, Philoctetes replies,

ἀεὶ καλὸς πλοῦς ἔσθ' ὅταν φεύγῃς κακά.

thus change their words for silence at least of any worth? since now I have beheld thee, unpromised, as unhopèd for.

OR. Then didst thou behold me, when the gods urged me to return<sup>x</sup>.

EL. Thou hast told me a joy yet higher than my former, if heaven hath impelled thee to our abodes: I pronounce this<sup>y</sup> from heaven.

OR. In part, I am reluctant to repress my joy; in part, I fear thy being too much overcome by rapture.

EL. Oh thou that thus hast deigned in length of time to show thyself with welcome approach to me, do not, I pray, having seen me thus deep in misery——

OR. What must I not do?

EL. Rob me not of my joy at thy countenance, that I give it up<sup>z</sup>.

OR. Nay I were enraged to see it even in others<sup>a</sup>.

EL. Dost thou consent?

OR. How should I not?

EL. My friends, I have heard the voice I never could have hoped to hear. I was cherishing a voiceless pas-

<sup>x</sup> Hermann supposes some such verse as the following to have been lost from this place:

αὐτοὶ γεγῶτες τῇσδε τῆς ὁδοῦ βραβῆς.

<sup>y</sup> Literally, "I vote this."

<sup>z</sup> Construe ἡδονὰν with ἀποστερήσης. "Græci, cum verba duo, diversos casus regentia, ad idem nomen æque referantur, ne nomen proprium aut pronomen minus suaviter repetatur, in utrovis regimine semel ponunt, altero omisso." Pors. ad Med. 734. Hermann justly, therefore, wonders that Porson should have altered the accusative here into ἁδονᾶν. Of ἀποστερεῖν with a double accus. see Matt. Gr. Gr. §. 412.

<sup>a</sup> That is, "were I to see any other attempting to rob thee of that joy."

sion, wretched that I was, not even hearing the news with a shriek<sup>b</sup>. But now I have thee; and thou hast dawned upon me with most dear aspect, which never could I have forgotten even in misery.

OR. This overflow of words dismiss, and tell me neither how wicked is my mother, nor how Ægisthus drains the riches of my father's house<sup>c</sup>, and part he wastes, and part he idly squanders; for this thy tale would obstruct the timely occasion: but what will suit me best at the present season, instruct, where showing, or concealing ourselves, we may by this our journey quell our insulting foes. But so [beware] that thy mother shall not find thee out by thy cheerful countenance, as we enter the palace, but, as for the calamity falsely announced, lament; for when we shall have succeeded, then will be our time to rejoice, and freely laugh.

<sup>b</sup> This beautifully expresses the depth of Electra's misery at the tidings of her brother's death; for, as Malcolm observes to Macduff,

“ ————— The grief that does not speak,

Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break.”

Hence Sophocles with the same idea makes Jocasta in Œdipus, and the queen in Antigone, quit the stage in silence; upon which latter occasion the chorus says, on being asked by the messenger what Eurydice's sorrow may mean,

“ I know not, but a silence so reserved

Imports some dread event: such are my thoughts;

A clamorous sorrow wastes itself in sound.”

Hermann understands the passage very differently: “ Neque dubitari potest, quin *ἀνανδον οὐδὲ σὺν βοᾷ κλύουσα* ad vocem hanc referendum sit, quam obticuisse mortuo Oreste acceperat Electra. . . . Facile conjicias *ἄς ἔσχον ὄργαν*, vel *ἄν* . . . Id non cum *ὄργαν* sed cum *αὐδάν* conjungi deberet, hac constructione *ἄν ἀνανδον οὐδὲ σὺν βοᾷ κλύουσα ἔσχον αὐδάν*.”

<sup>c</sup> Homer mentions the seduction of Clytemnestra, and luxurious indolence of Ægisthus at large in his *Odyssey*, B. III.

EL. But, O my brother, since thus it pleases thee, so shall my pleasure also be; since the joys I have reaped, I have so, deriving them from thee, and not mine own. And not by paining thee even a little would I choose myself to obtain a great advantage: for thus I were not duly obedient to our present good genius. But thou knowest all from hence: how shouldst thou not? hearing that Ægisthus is not within, but my mother is at home, whom never dread thou, that she shall see my countenance glowing with a smile: for both mine ancient hatred hath glued itself to me<sup>d</sup>, and since I have looked on thee I shall never cease shedding tears of joy. For how should I cease, who in a single journey have beheld thee both dead and alive? Yes, thou hast dealt unexpectedly with me<sup>e</sup>; so that were my father to come to me alive, no longer should I account it a prodigy, but believe I saw him. When then in this way thou comest to me, lead thou, as thou art minded; since I alone had not failed of two things, for either I had nobly delivered myself, or nobly perished.

OR. I recommend thee to be silent, since I hear some one of those within proceeding as on his way out.

EL. Enter ye, strangers, especially as bringing what none might reject from his house, nor be glad to receive within it<sup>f</sup>.

ATT. O utterly senseless and blasted in understand-

<sup>d</sup> Literally, "hath melted like wax into me."

<sup>e</sup> Or, "thou hast wrought me unexpected joys."

<sup>f</sup> This speech of Electra, as several of those she afterwards addresses to Ægisthus, is craftily ambiguous, in obedience to Orestes' instructions at v. 1296.



ing! What, have ye not longer any care for your life? or have ye no inborn prudence in you, that, although no longer on the verge but in the very midst of the greatest dangers, ye know it not? But had not I chanced long since to be watching at this portal, your schemes had been within the house before your persons; but now I have exerted precaution against this. And now, having bid adieu to protracted converse, and this insatiate clamour of delight, get ye privately within, since to delay is in such cases harm, but time calls for separation<sup>g</sup>.

OR. How then are matters from thence with me if I enter?

ATT. Well. For it chances that no one knows thee.

OR. Thou hast reported me, as fitting, to have fallen?

ATT. Know now, that, here a man, thou art one of those in Hades.

OR. Are they then glad at this? or what are their sentiments?

ATT. All finished, I would tell thee; but as it now fares, all is well with them, even what is not well<sup>h</sup>.

EL. Who is this, my brother? in heaven's name tell me.

<sup>g</sup> Brunck translates this, "*urget autem occasio rei gerendæ*;" and Johnson, "*tempus autem ipsum jam instat exsequendi*:" but as the verb ἀπαλλάσσομαι occurs just above, there seems no reason to alter its sense immediately afterwards. Of course the expression may be considered as relating either to their "ridding themselves of the business by executing it," or to their bidding a temporary adieu to each other: on these the reader must decide for himself.

<sup>h</sup> Namely, Clytemnestra's unmaternal joy and consequent security. H.

OR. Knowest thou not?

EL. At least I bring him not to mind.

OR. Knowest thou not into whose hands thou once consignedst me?

EL. To whom? How sayest thou?

OR. By whose hands I was privately conveyed to the Phocian's land, by thy forethought.

EL. What? is this he, whom once alone of many I found faithful at my father's murder<sup>i</sup>?

OR. This is he: question me with no more words.

EL. O dearest light! O sole preserver of Agamemnon's house, how hast thou come? what, art thou he who saved him and me from many a woe? O dearest hands! O thou that hast the most welcome service of the feet<sup>k</sup>! How thus long present to me didst thou elude, nor disclose thyself to me, but didst destroy me in words, bearing deeds most pleasant to me? Hail, my father, for a father I seem to behold; O hail! But know that thee of all men I most abhorred, most loved, in a single day.

ATT. Methinks it is enough; since for the tale that intervenes, many a night and day as long revolves, which shall explain all this clearly to thee, Electra. But I advise you at least that stand here, that now is the season for action; now Clytemnestra is alone; now there is not a man within: but if ye shall delay, bethink you that ye will have to battle with both these and other foes, abler and more than these.

<sup>i</sup> " ————— Faithful found

Among the faithless, faithful only he."

<sup>k</sup> See note on v. 1104.

OR. No more of lengthened discourse, O Pylades, may this be the crisis for us, but with all speed to haste within, having saluted the paternal abodes of the deities, as many as dwell in this vestibule<sup>1</sup>.

EL. Royal Apollo, favourably hear them, and with them me, who many a time indeed with suppliant hand, and such store as I possessed, have stood before thee. But now, Lycæan Phœbus, with such as I have, I beg, I fall before thee, I implore thee; be thou a willing abettor to us in these designs, and show mankind what reward, the price of impiety, the gods bestow.

CH. Behold where sallies forth Mars, breathing the blood of deadly strife. Even now are entering beneath the palace roof the hounds that follow after evil villanies, from whom is no escape<sup>m</sup>: wherefore not much longer will continue in suspense the presage of my soul. For the stealthy-footed avenger of the dead is secretly brought within the house, to the dwelling of his father teeming with ancient wealth, having upon his hands blood freshly spilt<sup>n</sup>; and the son of Maia °Mer-

<sup>1</sup> Thus Philoctetes, by the desire of Neoptolemus, salutes the tutelary guardians of his dreary abode when on the point of quitting Lemnos.

<sup>m</sup> Hermann understands this of Orestes and Pylades.

<sup>n</sup> Hermann has dissipated the clouds of the grammarians respecting αἷμα in the sense of sword, by showing that the metre requires νεοκόννητον, from κένω. Cf. Eur. El. 1172. The verse is a double dochmiac.

° “Mercury was the god of fraud and treachery, and called δόλοισι, or the deceiver; to him therefore were attributed all secret schemes and expeditions, good or bad. The propriety of Mercury’s peculiar assistance in this place may likewise be accounted for from his relation to Myrtilus, who was slain by Pelops.” Franklin. To which he might have added the personal slight that Mercury had received from Ægisthus. See Homer, Od. I.

cury conducts him, in darkness burying his guile, to the very boundary, nor longer tarries.

EL. O ladies, most beloved, the men will forthwith accomplish the deed; but wait it in silence.

CH. How then? What do they now?

EL. She is preparing a cauldron for the burial, but they are standing close by her.

CH. And wherefore hast thou hurried out?

EL. To watch that Ægisthus may not escape us on returning within.

[*Clytemnestra from within.*] Oh! oh! alas! alas! Oh abodes, destitute of friends, but full of the destroyers!

EL. Some one shrieks within. Hear ye not, my friends?

CH. I unhappy heard what was not fit to be heard, so that I shuddered.

CLY. Unhappy me; Ægisthus, where canst thou be?

“Hermes I sent, while yet his soul remain’d  
Sincere from royal blood, and faith profaned;  
To warn the wretch that young Orestes, grown  
To manly years, should reassert the throne:  
Yet impotent of mind, and uncontroll’d,  
He plunged into the gulf which heaven foretold.”

Pope’s Trans. L. 49.

P “Dacier puts these words into the mouth of one of the women that compose the Chorus; because (says he) Electra would never have said, ‘some one cries out,’ as she knew it must be Clytemnestra. The reader may take his choice in regard to this alteration. I have left it as it stands in the original, being a matter of no great consequence.” Thus Franklin;—neither he nor the French critic seeming aware that *rig* in this passage no more implies ignorance of the person, than it does in many passages of Aristophanes, for instance, in the *Ranæ*, vv. 552, 601, 628, or than in St. Luke, c. viii. v. 46.

EL. Hark ! again some one cries aloud.

CLY. My son, my son, pity her that bore thee.

EL. But not by thee was he pitied, nor the father that begat him.

CH. O city, O race ill-fated ! now destiny day after day wastes, wastes thee !

CLY. Ah me, I am stricken !

EL. Strike, if thou hast strength, a double stroke.

CLY. Woe is me again and again !

EL. Would it were likewise woe to Ægisthus.

CH. The curses are fulfilled ; they that lie beneath the earth are alive ; for the long since dead are secretly shedding the copious-streaming blood from those that slew them.

EL. Now however they are here, and their gory hand is dripping with the first sacrifice to Mars : yet can I not say, Orestes, how it is<sup>q</sup>.

OR. For what is within the palace, well, if well Apollo hath predicted. The wretched woman is dead ; no longer fear that a mother's spirit shall ever insult thee.

CH. Have done : for I plainly perceive Ægisthus.

EL. Youths, will ye not retire hastily ?

OR. Perhaps ye discern the man [coming] towards us<sup>r</sup> ?

<sup>q</sup> Hermann reads *ψέγειν*, putting these lines into the mouth of the Chorus, and the following half verse, which he gives to Electra, thus : 'Ορέστα, πῶς κυρεῖ δέ ; but to understand these words, οὐδ' ἔχω ψέγειν, of the murder of Clytemnestra, would suit neither the character of the Chorus nor the time. Hermann has therefore referred them to Ἀρεος, after which he puts a comma, and compares II. Δ. 539.

<sup>r</sup> Orestes, *εἰσορᾷτε ποῦ τὸν ἄνδρ'* ; and then Electra, *ἐφ' ἡμῖν, κ. τ. λ.* So Hermann, who excepts the verb from the interrogation thus : "Ye see the man ; where ?"

EL. He from the suburb advances rejoicing.

CH. Go through the opposite doorway with all possible speed<sup>s</sup>: now, having well disposed of all before, this again in turn<sup>t</sup>.

OR. Courage; we will effect it, dispose ye well.

EL. Hasten now, whither thou purposest.

OR. Well, then, I am gone.

EL. The rest should be my care.

CH. It would be useful to whisper a few words at least as mildly as possible to this man in his ear, that headlong he may run into the covert strife of vengeance.

#### ÆGISTHUS.

Who of you knows where the Phocian strangers can be, who, they say, bring us news that Orestes has lost his life amid the wrecks of the chariots? Thee, yes, thee, even thee I question, in time past so audacious, since I think thou hast most care for it, and best knowest so as to tell me.

EL. I do know it: for how should I not? for else had I been stranger to a casualty of dearest import of all to me.

ÆG. Where then may be the strangers? instruct me.

EL. Within; for a friendly hostess have they encountered<sup>u</sup>.

<sup>s</sup> "Est ἀντίθυρον locus in ædibus interior oppositus foribus. V. Lucian. Alexandro 16; Hemsterh. App. Anim. p. 15." Hermann.

<sup>t</sup> θῆσθε is to be understood. Herm.

<sup>u</sup> There is an intentional ambiguity in all Electra's language here: κατήνυσαν, upon which depends the genitive, has a double meaning of the preposition κατὰ: *confecerunt* [*viam vel rem*] κατὰ. Herm.

ÆG. What, and reported they of his death as certain?

EL. Nay, but they have also shown it to sight, not in words only.

ÆG. And is it for us to ascertain it as evident also?

EL. It is indeed at hand, and a most unenviable spectacle.

ÆG. Verily thou hast spoken to mine abundant joy, not in thy wonted manner.

EL. Joy thou, if such as this is joyful to thee.

ÆG. Command silence, and to throw open the gates for all Mycenæ and Argos to behold<sup>x</sup>, that if any among them was heretofore buoyed up with empty hopes of this man, now seeing him dead he may receive my curb, nor to his cost beget him after-wisdom, meeting with me his chastiser.

EL. And now is my part fulfilled, for at length I have got the sense to suit my betters.

ÆG. O Jove, I behold a sight that, without offence [be it said], hath well befallen: but if Nemesis attend, I recall my words<sup>y</sup>. Remove all covering from mine

<sup>x</sup> It was a common practice among the Greeks to set the corpse out to view. See Adams' Roman Antiquities on the word *depositus*, where he observes, that this custom was probably derived from that of exposing sick persons before the doors of their houses, that the passers by might suggest any medicine they had known to be of service in similar cases, as mentioned by Herodotus, b. i. 197. "Ægisthus, imagining that these Phocian strangers had brought the dead body of Orestes, expected to find it laid at the entrance of the house, ad limen, such being the general usage of antiquity." Potter.

<sup>y</sup> See note on v. 792. Potter remarks on the peculiar indecency of which Ægisthus was here guilty, (and in which he checks himself,) he being a near relation to Orestes. But Hermann retains in the former line the old reading *ὀν*, and compares Æsch. Agam. 913. with this meaning: "*cecidit*

eyes, that my kindred, look you, may meet with lamentation from me too.

OR. Do thou thyself lift it: this is not my part but thine, both to look on this, and accost it as a friend.

ÆG. Nay, thou advisest well, and I will obey; but do thou, if haply Clytemnestra be within, call her.

OR. She is close by thee, look not elsewhere.

ÆG. Ah me! what do I behold?

OR. Whom fearest thou? whom knowest thou not?

ÆG. Into what man's surrounding trammels can I wretched have fallen?

OR. What, perceivest thou not long ago, that thou parleyest with the living just as dead?

ÆG. Ah me! I comprehend thy words; for it cannot be but this that speaketh to me must be Orestes.

OR. Aye, and though so good a prophet, wert thou deceived thus long<sup>2</sup>?

ÆG. Then wretched I am undone; but permit me to say, though but a little.

EL. Let him speak no further, in heaven's name, my brother, nor lengthen out his words. For what profit should he among mortals involved in evils, that is about to die, gain by time? No, slay him with utmost speed; and having slain expose him to buriers, such as 'tis reason he should have, unseen of us<sup>a</sup>. Since this could be the only atonement to me of my former wrongs.

*ille via et insidia deorum, si fas est hoc dicere. Sentit enim ipse impudenter se hanc mortem justitiæ deorum adscribere; unde addit, 'si hoc nefas est indictum volo.'*

<sup>2</sup> Orestes means that Ægisthus, who could now foresee his fate so clearly, might have anticipated it long ago.

<sup>a</sup> Potter observes, on the authority of Pausanias, that Ægisthus and Cly-



OR. Thou must go speedily within; for the strife is not now of words, but for thy life.

ÆG. Why takest thou me in doors? how, if this deed be honourable, needs it darkness, and why art not thou ready with thine hand to slay me?

OR. Order not, but go thither where thou slewest my father, that on that very spot thou mayest die.

ÆG. What, is it absolutely doomed that this roof witness both the present and future ills of the Pelopidæ?

OR. Thine at all events. I am in this a most certain augur to thee.

ÆG. But no paternal art is this thou hast vaunted.

OR. Thou answerest much, while thy departure is retarded: but begone.

ÆG. Lead the way.

OR. Thou must go first.

ÆG. Is it that I escape thee not?

OR. Nay, lest thou die then with pleasure<sup>b</sup>: it is my duty to keep this bitter to thee: but good were it that this vengeance were immediate on all, at least, whoever wishes to transgress the laws, to slay them. For then were not villany abundant.

CH. O seed of Atreus, how much having suffered hast thou hardly worked out thy way to freedom<sup>c</sup>; brought to thy completion by the present attempt!

temnestra, being held unworthy of a tomb in the same place in which Agamemnon lay, were buried just outside the city walls.

<sup>b</sup> Compare this sentiment of Orestes with that of Hamlet, where he hesitates to kill his uncle while praying. We must hope for the sake of the authors that they considered both their heroes as madmen.

<sup>c</sup> Or, "come by freedom."



# ANTIGONE.

VOL. I.

Q

**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.**

**ANTIGONE.**

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# ANTIGONE.

ANTIGONE.

**O** KINDRED form of my own sister Ismene<sup>a</sup>, knowest thou any of the evils descending from Œdipus, which Jove will not yet accomplish to us in life? for there is nothing, either wretched or ruinous, or base and degrading, which I have not beheld in your evils and mine. And now again, what is this proclamation which they say the ruler has just propounded to all the people of the city? Knowest thou? and hast thou heard aught? or do the injuries of enemies advancing against friends escape thy notice?

<sup>a</sup> The curses of Œdipus have now been fulfilled: Polynices and Eteocles have fallen by each other's hands, and the army of the Argives has been routed before the walls of Thebes. Antigone is not forgetful of the request of Polynices at their last interview, and determines, in spite of the edict to the contrary, to bestow the rites of sepulture on her unhappy brother. As the play mainly turns on this circumstance, it is necessary to bear in mind how much importance the ancients attached to the burial of the dead. The constancy of Antigone's resolution will thus be explained, the violence of her sisterly affection justified, and even the merit of her generous conduct enhanced.

## ISMENE.

To me indeed, Antigone, no tidings of friends, either sweet or sorrowful, have come from the time that we two were bereft of two brothers, dying on the same day by a mutual hand: and since the army of the Argives has disappeared during this night, I know nothing farther, neither being more prosperous nor more afflicted.

ANT. I knew it well; and therefore have I sent for you without the gates of the courts, that you might hear alone.

ISM. But what is it? for you shew you are boiling with some thought<sup>b</sup>.

ANT. For has not Creon honoured one of our brothers with sepulture, and deprived the other of this honour? Eteocles, indeed, as they say, acting upon the rights of justice and law, he has entombed beneath the earth, an honoured shade to the gods below; but the corpse of Polynices, which wretchedly fell, they say it has been proclaimed to the citizens that no one shall enclose in the tomb, nor wail over, but leave it unlamented and unburied<sup>c</sup>, a sweet treasure to birds hasten-

<sup>b</sup> Καλχαίνουσα is properly a word expressive of the purple dye (κάλλη) bubbling up from the depths of the sea, and is here used in an analogous way, to express the agitated state of the mind.

<sup>c</sup> This was the judgment which God denounced against Jehoiakim, king of Judah: "They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah, my brother! or, Ah, sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah, lord! or, Ah, his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass," etc. Jer. xxii. 18, 19. The customs and manners of the Greeks were originally drawn from the eastern nations; which accounts for the similitude so observable in Sophocles, and other heathen writers, with some parts of Holy Writ. *Francklin.*

ing to the delight of the banquet. Such things they say that the good Creon has proclaimed to you and me, for I say even me, and that he is coming hither to herald them clearly forth to those who do not know them, and to bid them consider the matter not as a thing of nought, but whosoever shall do one of those things, that a death by the stoning of the people is decreed him in the city. Thus rests this case to you, and you will quickly shew whether you have been born of generous spirit, or degenerate from the good.

ISM. But what, oh wretched woman! if these things are in this state, could I avail more, doing away with, or confirming the law?

ANT. Consider if you will labour along with me, and assist me in the work.

ISM. In what sort of hazard? Where in intention at all are you?

ANT. If you will raise up along with this hand the dead body.

ISM. For do you design to bury him, interdicted by the state?

ANT. Yes, him who is at all events my brother; and though you wish it not, yours<sup>d</sup>: for I will not be found to betray him.

ISM. Oh audacious woman! when Creon forbids?

ANT. But he has no business to put a barrier betwixt me and mine<sup>e</sup>.

<sup>e</sup> That is, "Though you, an unnatural sister, would disown him:" or it may be, more simply, "I will bury him, though you do not wish it."

<sup>c</sup> This dialogue between Antigone and Ismene exceedingly resembles that between the sisters in the tragedy of Electra, by the same author. The sentiments and the characters entirely correspond. Antigone and

ISM. Ah me! think, oh sister! how our father perished in odium and infamy, having, on the detection of his guilt, himself torn out both his eyes with self-destroying hand: then his mother and wife, a double term, mars her life by the suspended cords: and, third, the two wretched brothers, slaying themselves on the same day, wrought their mutual death each by a brother's hand. And now we two, being left alone, consider by how much the worst of all we shall perish, if, in violation of the law, we transgress the decree or power of superiors. But it behoves us, indeed, to reflect in the first place, that we are by nature women, so as not able to contend against men; and then, since we are ruled by those more powerful, to submit to these things, and things still more painful than these. I then indeed, asking those below the earth to forgive me, since I am constrained to this, will obey those who walk in office<sup>f</sup>; for to attempt those things beyond our power, implies no wisdom.

ANT. Neither would I request you, nor though you now wished to do it, should you act along with me, at least with my good will. But be<sup>g</sup> of such a character as seems good to you; but I will bury him: it were glorious to me, doing this, to die. I beloved will lie with him,—with him I love, having audaciously done

Electra are generous and bold; Ismene and Chrysothemis selfish and pitiful.

<sup>f</sup> This is a principle of conduct with a great many people besides Ismene, though they may not always be quite so candid as the young lady in confessing it.

<sup>g</sup> Brunck has here made a mistake in deriving ἴσθι from ἴσθμι scio, instead of εἶμι sum.



what is holy<sup>h</sup>; since the time is longer which it is required of me to please those below than those here; for there I shall ever lie. But if it seems good to you, do you hold in dishonour those things which are honoured of the gods.

ISM. I indeed do not hold them in dishonour; but to act against the will of the citizens I am by nature incapable.

ANT. You indeed may make this pretext, but I will go to raise a tomb for my dearest brother.

ISM. Woe is me! for you unhappy! how I fear excessively for you!<sup>i</sup>

ANT. Fear not for me:—direct aright your own fate.

ISM. But do not then at any rate previously disclose this deed to any one, but conceal it in secret, and in like manner will I conceal it.

ANT. Ah me! speak it out. You will be much more hateful silent, if you do not proclaim these things to all.

ISM. You have a warm spirit in a chilling enterprise.

ANT. But I know that I please those whom it most befits me to please.

ISM. Aye, that is if you shall be able: but you long for what is impossible.

ANT. Therefore, when I have not power, I shall cease.

<sup>h</sup> "Wickedly" were perhaps a better word, did it not make the expression rather too contradictory. Antigone confesses her violation of the law, but justifies the means by the end. This is what is implied in ὅσα πανουργήσασα, to which we have something similar in the phrase of "a pious fraud."

<sup>i</sup> Οἶμοι ταλαίρης dicit hoc sensu, Hei mihi propter tuam audaciam. Herm.

ISM. But it is not fitting to pursue at all what is impossible.

ANT. If you will speak thus, you will be hated indeed by me, and will justly be hated, in addition, by him that is dead. But suffer me, and my rash counsels, to endure this danger; for I shall not suffer any thing so great, so as not to die gloriously.

ISM. But, if it thus seem good to you, go; and know this, that you go indeed unwise, but to your friends right a friend.

#### CHORUS.

Beam of the sun<sup>k</sup>, that hath shone the fairest light of all before to Thebes with her seven gates, thou hast at length gleamed forth, oh eye of golden day! peering above the channels of Dirce's streams, having driven in rapid flight with keener-urged rein the chief of the silver shield<sup>1</sup>, who came from Argos with all his panoply,—the chief, who, incited against our land by the dubious contentions of Polynices, shrilly screaming, like an eagle descending to earth, hovered over us, covered with the wing of white snow, with many a shield, and with plumed helms. And having taken his stand above our palaces, ravening all around with bloody spears the outlets of the seven gates, he de-

<sup>k</sup> Musgrave suggests, that the poetry of this beautiful passage will be heightened by supposing the chorus to deliver their address to the sun immediately after his rise. The probability of it is confirmed by the splendour and abruptness of the apostrophe, and still more by the moment being marked when the rays of the luminary begin to stream over the fountains of Dirce.

<sup>1</sup> Adrastus, the king of Argos, and leader of the vanquished army on this occasion.

parted before that he had gorged his jaws with our blood, and pitchy flame had wrapt the coronet of our towers: such a din of battle was raised in his rear, no easy conquest to the opposing dragon<sup>m</sup>. For Jove detests the vaunts of a haughty tongue; and seeing them rushing on in a mighty stream, with the clangour of gold, and in the pride of armour, he dashes down with the volleyed flame, him, who was already hastening to ring forth the shout of victory on the summits of the battlements. And the bearer of the fire<sup>n</sup> fell shattered with rebound on earth, he who then raging with frantic impulse, blew upon us with the blasts of most hateful winds. And in a different quarter a different fortune indeed prevailed, and mighty Mars leading the right wing<sup>o</sup> and thickening the fray, directed other evils against others. For seven leaders, marshalled against seven gates, equal against equal foes, left to Jove, the god of trophies<sup>p</sup>, their all-brazen

<sup>m</sup> Verte: *talis circa tergum* (aquilæ) *intendebatur Martis strepitus, hostili draconi* (Thebanis) *tractatu difficilis*, minime, ut Brunckius accepit, *insuperabilis*. Erf.—Hoc dicit: *tantus a tergo concitatus est strepitus Martis, insuperabilis propter adversarium draconem*. Herm.

<sup>n</sup> Capaneus, who threatened to give Thebes to the flames, and who was struck down by a thunderbolt while he attempted to scale the walls. There are magnificent descriptions of his fate in the Seven Chiefs against Thebes, of Æschylus, and in that most beautiful of plays, the Phœnissæ of Euripides.

<sup>o</sup> Δεξιόσσιπος, literally the right trace horse. The Greek chariots were drawn by four horses abreast, two harnessed to the pole and two in traces. As the turn in the race-course was usually to the left, (v. Il. 23. 335.) the strongest horse was generally placed farthest to the right. Hermann has therefore justly observed: “Sic appellavit Martem Sophocles, ut impetuosum, dextri equi more, significaret. Pariter Æschylus, quum fortem et validum vellet indicare, σιραιφόρον κριθῶντα πῶλον dixit Agam. 1651, 2.”

<sup>p</sup> Or, “Jove that turns the battle.”

arms, except the accursed two who sprung from one father and one mother, having raised against themselves their equally victorious spears, both shared the lot of a mutual death. But change the strain<sup>q</sup>, for high-renowned Victory hath come with joys to compensate Thebe, the mistress of many a car. Now indeed it is fitting to forget these wars<sup>r</sup>, and let us approach all the temples of the gods with dances that last through the live-long night; and let Bacchus, rousing Thebes, begin the revelry. But cease, for here Creon, son of Menœceus, the new king of this land, comes, upon these new casualties of heaven, revolving doubtless some anxious thought, since he hath announced this assembled conference of senators, sending for them by common proclamation.

CREON.

Ye men, the gods have again established the safety of the city, after having shaken it with many a wave: but I have sent for you by messengers to come apart from all, both knowing well that you ever revered the might of the throne of Laius, and again, when Œdipus directed the state, and when he perished, that you remained with constant spirits towards his sons. Since therefore they have perished on the same day by

<sup>q</sup> Ἄλλ᾽, thus used, always implies an ellipsis, and I have taken the liberty, both here and a few lines below, of supplying it.

<sup>r</sup> I am not sure but the construction of this passage proposed by Erfurdt, is better than Brunck's: "*τῶν νῦν non videtur ad πολέμων pertinere: nam et languidum foret, nec dicitur ἐκθίσθαι λημοσύνην, sed θίσθαι. Quare jungenda censeo verba sic: ἐκ πολέμων, post bellum, θίσθε λημοσύναν τῶν νῦν, obliviscami præsentia, i. e. funera fratrum.*"

a mutual death, striking and stricken in suicidal guilt, I hold all the power and the throne by affinity of blood with the dead. But it is impossible to ascertain the soul, and spirit, and judgment of every man, before he shall be seen tried by office<sup>s</sup>, and the administration of the laws. For whosoever, ruling a whole state, applies not to the best counsels, but from some fear restrains his tongue, appears to me, both now and formerly, to be the basest of men; and whosoever esteems his friend more than his country, him I hold in no account. For I, let Jupiter who ever beholds all things know it, would neither be silent, seeing ruin, in place of safety, coming upon the citizens; nor would I ever make a man who was hostile to my country, a friend to myself, knowing this, that it is our country which preserves us, and that, sailing in her unfounded, we make friends<sup>t</sup>. By such laws as these I will exalt this city, and now I have proclaimed to the citizens things in unison with these concerning the sons of Œdipus. Eteocles indeed, who fell fighting for this city, bearing the palm in every thing with his spear, I have commanded them both to enshroud in the tomb, and to consecrate to him all the honours that are paid to the gallant dead below. But him again, the brother of this man, I mean Polynices,

<sup>s</sup> 'Ἀρχὴ ἀνδρα δείξει, from which Creon borrows his maxim, was an old proverbial saying, attributed originally to Bias of Priene, one of the seven sages of Greece.

<sup>t</sup> Creon, though an absolute monarch, dreaded the unpopularity of his sacrilegious edict. He therefore endeavours, by a great many plausible expressions of patriotism and integrity, to do away with unfavourable impressions in the minds of the citizens, and to extort from their fear an approbation of his conduct.

who, on his return from exile, wished to consume utterly with flames the country of his fathers, and gods of that country, and wished to glut himself with kindred blood, and having enslaved the citizens, to lead them away,—him it has been proclaimed to this city, that neither any one shall lay with rites in the tomb, nor wail over him, but leave him unburied, and behold his body devoured and mangled by birds and dogs. Such is my will ; and never from me at least shall the wicked have honour in preference to the just : but whosoever displays good will to this city, shall, both in life and death, be equally honoured by me.

CH. The same things please me as please thee<sup>u</sup>, Creon, son of Menœceus, concerning the one who was an enemy, and the other, who was a friend to this city : but it resides in you to use any law, both concerning the dead, and concerning us, as many as live<sup>x</sup>.

CR. See that ye be now guardians of the edict.

CH. Impose this on some younger one to bear.

CR. But there are watchers of the corpse, at least, prepared.

CH. What farther than this in truth would you yet enjoin ?

<sup>u</sup> Σοι non ad ἀρέσκει, sed ad τὰ αὐτὰ refertur, subaudito alio pronomine με. Constructio est, ἀρέσκει με τὰ αὐτὰ σοι. Brunck.

<sup>x</sup> The Chorus are as complying and servile as Creon could desire. Later in the play they rather change their tone ; but it is a pity that they, whose office it was to deliver the lessons of morality and virtue, should have at all been represented out of their natural character. It has been suggested by some, that the poet meant to gratify his countrymen by placing their enemies, the Thebans, in the contemptible light of slaves. If this reason be true, we can only regret that he was induced, by such an unworthy motive, to deform one of his finest productions by a disagreeable inconsistency.

CR. Not to give way to those that disobey this mandate.

CH. There is no one so foolish as to desire to die.

CR. And in truth this at least is the reward ; but gain has oft, by means of hope, destroyed men.

MESSANGER<sup>y</sup>.

O king, I will not indeed say that I come panting with speed, having lifted up a nimble foot, for I had many resistances of thought, wheeling myself round in the way to return, and my mind holding a dialogue with me, said many things. “ Unhappy man, why go you where coming you shall suffer punishment? Yet, wretch, do you stop? If Creon shall learn these things from some other man, how in truth shall you not smart for it?” Revolving such thoughts, I made out my journey tardy with delay, and thus a short way is made long. In the end, however, the resolution prevailed to come hither ; and to you, though I say nothing agreeable, I will nevertheless speak, for I come persuaded by the hope that I shall suffer nothing else except what is fated.

CR. But what is it from which you feel this disheartening fear?

MESS. I wish first to tell what regards myself<sup>z</sup> ;

<sup>y</sup> This Ἀγγελος or Φύλαξ, (for editors disagree about his designation,) is a very prating and impertinent sort of person. Few tyrants would have contented themselves with saying, ὡς λάλημα δῆλον ἐκπεφυκὸς εἶ, but would have been much more likely to have chopped off his head for his pains.

<sup>z</sup> The commentators quote a parallel speech to this from the Eunuchus of Terence :—

for I neither did the deed, nor did I see who was the perpetrator, nor ought I justly to fall into any mischief.

CR. You scrutinize at least the matter well, and fence it all round ; but you seem about to signify some news.

MESS. For dangers create great fear.

CR. Will you not at length speak, and then depart freed ?

MESS. And now indeed I tell you. Some one has gone, having just buried the dead body, and having sprinkled the dry dust over the skin, and having performed the proper rites.

CR. What say you ? what mortal dared this ?

MESS. I know not ; for there was neither stroke of axe nor any rubbish cast forth by the spade, but the earth was firm and the soil unbroken, nor did it bear the track of wheels, but the worker was one who left no trace<sup>a</sup>. And when the first watchman of the day discovers it to us, painful wonder was felt by all. For he indeed had disappeared, yet not enclosed in a tomb, but a slight covering of dust was over him, as if bestowed by some one avoiding the pollution<sup>b</sup> ; and there

“ Here, primum te arbitrari id quod res est velim :

Quicquid hujus factum est, culpa non factum est mea.”

There is nothing, after all, so very wonderful in this discovery, as it is probable that scarcely any suspected person ever began to tell his story without a similar preface.

<sup>a</sup> The messenger wishes to clear himself by insinuating, that it was not any mortal power that had performed these operations. The Chorus, when he concludes, expresses the same opinion : but Creon was not to be so easily deceived.

<sup>b</sup> The person who passed a dead body without bestowing a handful of



appeared no marks of a wild beast or dog coming and tearing him. Then revilings were uttered against each other, watchman charging his fellow, and it would have ended in blows, nor was there any one to prevent them; for each individual was the perpetrator, and no one was convicted, but the knowledge escaped us. And we were ready to lift masses of red-hot iron in our hands<sup>c</sup>, and to pass through fire, and to appeal to the gods by oath, that we neither did it, nor were conscious to any one who devised or executed the deed. In the end, when there was nothing gained by our inquiries, some one speaks, who made us all bend our heads to earth through fear; for we knew not how to object, nor how doing it we should prosper; and his words were, that the deed should be reported to you, and not concealed. This proposal prevailed; and the lot seizes on me, unhappy, to gain this prize; and I am present, I know, unwilling and unwelcome, for no one loves the bearer of evil tidings.

CH. My mind, O king, is from long since deliberating whether this deed be wrought by heaven.

CR. Stay your words before you fill me with anger, lest you be discovered at the same time a fool and a

dust on it, was held by the ancient superstition to be (*ἐναγής*) polluted. Archytas, in the well-known ode of Horace, enjoins the mariner to observe the pious rite:—

Quanquam festinas, non est mora longa, licebit  
Injecto ter pulvere curras.

<sup>c</sup> This is an early allusion to the use of the ordeals, afterwards so prevalent in Europe during the dark ages. There are many miraculous escapes from both fire and water detailed in the monkish histories of our own country.

dotard: for you say what is intolerable, saying that the gods have provident care concerning this corpse. Whether, highly honouring him as a benefactor, have they buried him who came to set on fire their pillared temples, and to destroy the consecrated gifts, their land and laws? or do you see the gods honouring the wicked? It is not so; but the citizens, bearing these things ill, even formerly murmured against me, secretly shaking the head, nor did they stoop the crest, as they ought, beneath the yoke, so as to submit to me. I well know that these men, corrupted by bribes from them, have done this. For no such evil institution as money has arisen to men. It lays waste cities<sup>d</sup>; it drives away men from their homes; it seduces and perverts the honest inclinations of mortals to turn to base actions; and it has taught men to learn villanies, and to know the impiety of every deed. But as many as for hire have done this, have in time wrought out their fate, so as to suffer punishment; and if Jove still has reverence from me<sup>e</sup>, know this well, and under an oath I say it to you, if you do not, discovering him who with his own hand made the tomb, produce him to my eyes, death alone shall not suffice for you, before that, hung up alive, ye make manifest this insult, in order that, knowing whence gain is to be drawn, you may for the future seize it, and may learn that it is not fitting to

<sup>d</sup> ————— Diffidit urbium

Portas vir Macedo, et subruit æmulos

Reges muneribus.

HOR. III. 16.

<sup>e</sup> The scholiast explains this, εἰ τιμῶ καὶ σέβω τὸν Δία, καὶ μὴ ἐπιτορκῶ αὐτόν.

wish to make profit from every thing ; for by unjust gain you will see more ruined than preserved.

MESS. Will you grant me to say something, or, turning, shall I thus depart ?

CR. Do you not know even now how disagreeably you speak ?

MESS. Are you pained in the ears or in the mind ?

CR. Why ? do you explore my grief where it lies ?

MESS. He who did it pains the mind, and I the ears.

CR. Alas me ! how plainly you are by nature nothing but talk.

MESS. I am not therefore the person who did this deed.

CR. Yes, and for money too betraying your life.

MESS. Alas ! it is hard that to whom at least there are suspicions, his suspicions should be false.

CR. Talk big now about suspicion : but if ye do not shew to me who did this, ye will confess that wicked gain works ruin.

MESS. But may he by all means indeed be discovered : but be he taken or not, for fortune will decide this, it is not likely you shall see me coming hither again. And now, preserved beyond my expectation and opinion, I owe many thanks to the gods.

#### CHORUS.

Many things are wily<sup>f</sup>, and nothing is more wily than man. He even sails beyond the sea<sup>g</sup>, when whitened

<sup>f</sup> Brunck renders *δαιδά*, mirabilia ; Musgrave, much more correctly, *astuta*, solertia.

<sup>g</sup> *Toûro* is by some construed *κατὰ τοῦτο*, itaque ; I have taken it as

into foam with the wintry blasts, passing over the billows that roar around; and the supreme of divinities immortal, undecaying Earth, he furrows, his ploughs circling from year to year, turning up her soil with the offspring of the steed<sup>h</sup>. And ensnaring the brood of light-minded birds<sup>i</sup>, he bears them away as his prey, and the tribes of the monsters of the wild, and the marine race of the deep in the inwoven meshes of his nets, all-inventive man; and he masters by his devices the tenant of the chase, the wild beast that ranges the mountain, and by and by he shall bring under the neck-encircling yoke, the shaggy-maned horse, and the untameable mountain bull. And he hath taught himself language and lofty wisdom<sup>k</sup>, and the customs of civic

agreeing with γένος—τοῦτο τὸ γένος τῶν ἀνθρώπων. This, however, is mere matter of choice, as both the modes are equally unobjectionable.

<sup>h</sup> I cannot resist giving my readers this sentence from the translation of Adams: "He traverses the hoary main in stormy winds, by the rattling tumours of swollen sails, and pierces the supreme incorruptible land of the immortal gods, year after year returning to plough it with horse-kind." p. 189.

<sup>i</sup> κουφονόων. Libri omnes κουφονέων, mendose. Brunck. In spite of this authoritative judgment we are inclined to think the "libri omnes" are correct. Wakefield approves of κουφονέων in his notes to Lucretius, VI. 743. and renders it, "celeriter navigantium," a meaning much more applicable to the passage, and consistent with the general spirit of the Chorus. An epithet indicative of the speed of the birds, heightens the difficulty which man's power has to overcome; and we find in the other instances, that the poet has made a most judicious choice of expressions with a view to this effect.

<sup>k</sup> I have followed Hesychius in the explanation of ἡνεμέον, as simply meaning ὑψηλόν, μετέωρον. Brunck has it, "sublimium rerum scientiam," which he copies from the περὶ τῶν μετέωρων φιλοσοφίαν of the scholiast. Erfurdt and Hermann understand it as expressive of the speed of thought: but Benedict disagrees with them for the following reason: "Sensus sub-

law, and to avoid the cold and stormy arrows of uncomfortable frosts. Finding a way through every thing, he comes to nothing that is to be without resource. Of the grave alone he shall not introduce escape; but yet he hath devised remedies against baffling disease. Having beyond belief a certain inventive skill of art, he at one time advances to evil and at another time to good. Observing the laws of the land, and the plighted justice of heaven, he is high in the state; but an outcast from the state is he, with whomsoever that which is not honourable resides by reason of audacity; neither may he dwell with me, nor have sentiments like mine, who acts thus——

I am in doubt at this miraculous prodigy! How knowing her shall I deny this to be the maiden Antigone? O wretched woman, and sprung from a wretched father, Œdipus, what at all means this? Sure they do not lead you, at least, disobeying the mandates of the king, and having seized you in the frantic attempt?

MESS. This is she that has wrought the deed. Her we found employed in the burial:—but where is Creon?

CH. Returning from his palace; he is passing out to meet the opportunity.

CR. What is it? What chance thus coinciding has happened<sup>1</sup>?

MESS. O king, nothing is to be disavowed by mor-

*limes docendo quidem instillari possunt humanæ menti, non autem cogitationum celeritas, quæ major sive minor ex indole cujusque naturali dependet."*

<sup>1</sup> "What has happened so opportunely commensurate, or coincident with my arrival?"

tals, for later opinion gives the lie to the judgment ; since I would confidently have maintained, that I would have been slow of ever returning hither, on account of your threats<sup>m</sup>, by which I was formerly endangered. But, for the joy which is without and beyond the hopes resembles in magnitude no other pleasure, I come, though pledged to the contrary by oaths, bringing this virgin, who was detected adorning the tomb. The lot here was not shaken, but this is my prize<sup>n</sup>, none other's. And now, O king, taking her as you please, yourself question and convict her ; but I freed am justly entitled to get rid of these evils.

CR. In what way do you bring her ? whence taking her ?

MESS. She was burying the man : you know all.

CR. Do you both understand and correctly deliver what you tell ?

MESS. Having at least seen her in the act of burying the dead body which you interdicted. Do I relate these things clearly and plainly ?

CR. And how was she seen and found taken in the act ?

MESS. The circumstance was of this nature :—For when we came, threatened with these dreadful torments by you, having swept away all the dust which covered the corpse, and having well stript the clammy body, we took our seat to the windward of the top of the hill,

<sup>m</sup> ταῖς σαῖς ἀπειλαῖς, propter minas tuas. Vide ad Œd. Col. 1280. Musgrave.

<sup>n</sup> All lucky and unexpected gain was ascribed to the kindness of the god Hermes ; and the word ἔρμαιον refers to this attribute, and is derived from his name.

having avoided the stench from the body lest it should reach us<sup>o</sup>, each keenly rousing his fellow with bitter reproaches if any one should be sparing of this toil. These things continued for so long a time, until the brilliant orb of the sun took its place in the middle of the firmament, and the heat was burning, and then suddenly a whirlwind having raised its furious impulse from the ground, pest of the sky, fills the plain, smiting all the foliage of the woodlands; and the mighty air was filled; and having closed our eyes we endured the heaven-sent plague. And this having departed in length of time, the maiden is seen in view, and she is wailing forth the bitter note of the plaintive bird, like when it beholds the bed of its empty nest deprived of its young. Thus also she, when she beholds the dead body bare, burst forth into strains of grief, and baneful curses did she imprecate on those who wrought the deed, and straightway she brings the dry dust in her hands, and from the well-fashioned brazen urn high-raised aloft with thrice-poured libations she crowns the dead. And we seeing it rushed and immediately seized her, not in the least appalled; and we accused her both of the former and the present doings, and denial of none of them was attempted. But this to me at least is at the same time pleasing and painful: for to escape from evils myself is most pleasing, but to bring friends into misfortune is painful. But it appertains to me by nature to consider all these things less important than my own safety.

CR. You, you bending your head to the ground, do you confess or do you deny having done this?

<sup>o</sup> Constructio est; *πεφευγότες δσμὴν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, μὴ βάλοι, fugientes odorem ejus, ne nos feriret.* Musgrave.

ANT. I both confess I did it, and I do not deny that I did not.

CR. You may take yourself off where you please<sup>p</sup>, free from the heavy charge. But do you tell me not at length, but briefly, did you know the proclamation forbidding this<sup>q</sup>?

ANT. I knew it. And why should I not? for it was plain.

CR. And have you dared then to transgress these laws?

ANT. For it was not Jove who proclaimed this to me<sup>r</sup>, nor Justice, that dwells with the gods below the earth, who established these laws among men; nor did I think your proclamations had so much power, so as being a mortal to transcend the unwritten and immovable laws of the gods<sup>s</sup>. For not now, at least, or of yesterday, but eternally they live, and no one knows from what time they had their being. I was not going through fear of the spirit of any man to pay the penalty of their violation to the gods. For I knew I must die,

<sup>p</sup> Addressing the Messenger.

<sup>q</sup> Addressing Antigone.

<sup>r</sup> This speech of Antigone contains a fine expression of high-toned feeling and virtuous resolution. Nothing can surpass the sublimity with which she alludes to the power of principle, and eternity of duration in the laws of heaven; and the touching manner in which she consoles herself for her untimely doom, is the noblest picture of devoted heroism triumphing over nature and the weakness of woman.

<sup>s</sup> This may either refer, as I have taken it, to Creon, or to Antigone herself: "so as being a mortal I should venture to transgress these laws." There is this objection, however, to the latter mode, that *ὑπερτρέχειν* does not so properly mean violare, as superare, vincere. Vide Benedict. Obs. 117.



(and why not?) even though you had not proclaimed it, and if I die before my day I account it gain; for whosoever lives like me in many sorrows, how does not he by death obtain advantage<sup>t</sup>. Thus to me, at least, to meet with this fate, the sorrow is nothing: but if I had suffered him who was born of my mother to lie in death an unburied corpse, in that case I would have sorrowed; in this I sorrow not. But if I seem to you now to happen to do what is foolish, I merely incur the imputation of folly from a fool.

CH. The spirit of the daughter shews itself stern from a stern father, and she knows not to yield to misfortune.

CR. But know that too stern spirits bend the most; and you will most frequently see the hardest steel, heated in the fire till brittle, shivered and broken; and I have known high-mettled horses disciplined by a small bit; for it is not right for him to have proud thoughts whosoever is the slave of others. She indeed then first learned to be guilty of insolence, transgressing the ordained laws; and this, when she had done it, is the second insult, to glory in such deeds, and to laugh having done them. Either indeed I am not a man, but she a man, if this victory shall accrue to her without hurt. But whether she be sprung from my sister, or one more near of blood than all beneath the protection of our household god<sup>u</sup>, she and her sister

<sup>t</sup> Τοῦ ζῆν δὲ λυπρῶς κρείσσειν ἐστὶ κατθανεῖν.

Eurip. Troad. v. 632.

<sup>u</sup> The meaning of the phrase τοῦ παντὸς Ζηνὸς Ἑρκίου can only be expressed, as the reader will easily perceive, by a periphrasis. The altar of

shall not escape the most wretched fate ; for I charge her equally with having planned the measures respecting this burial. And summon her ; for just now I saw her within raving, not possessed of her senses ; and the mind of those who unjustly devise any thing in the dark, is wont to be prematurely detected in its fraud\*. I indeed at least hate when any one, discovered in guilt, may then wish to gloss it over.

ANT. Do you wish any thing more than taking me to put me to death ?

CR. I indeed wish nothing more. Having this I have all.

ANT. Why in truth do you delay ? since to me none of your words are pleasing, nor ever could be made pleasing ; and in like manner also, to you mine are naturally displeasing. And yet whence could I have gained a glory of higher renown, than by laying my own brother in the tomb ? It would be said that this was approved of by all these, did not fear seal their tongues. But regal power is fortunate in many other things, and in this, that it is allowed to say and to do what it pleases.

CR. You alone of these Cadmeans view it in this light.

Hercæan Jove stood in the court of every house ; and he was worshipped, as his name imports, in the light of its guardian and defender.

\* κλοπεύς. Conjungo cum πρόσθεν ἡρῆσθαι, ut constructio sit : ὁ δὲ θυμὸς τῶν ἐν σκότῳ μὴδὲν ὀρθῶς τεχνωμένων, φιλεῖ πρόσθεν κλοπεύς ἡρῆσθαι. “ Mens autem eorum, qui in tenebris pravi aliquid moliantur, solet prius malefica convinci, i. e. maleficii convinci.” Musgrave. “ Mens eorum, qui aliquid sceleris clam moliantur, quum alioqui sit illius occulta-rix, solet tamen prius deprehendi.” H. Stephanus. This latter explanation is obscurum per obscurius with a vengeance.

ANT. These also view it in the same light, but for you they close the lips.

CR. And are not you ashamed if you have sentiments different from theirs?

ANT. No, for it is nothing shameful to revere those who sprung from the same womb.

CR. Was not he also your brother who fell on the opposite side?

ANT. My brother sprung from one mother and the same father<sup>y</sup>.

CR. How in truth do you award the other an honour that is impious to him?

ANT. The dead below the earth will not testify this.

CR. He will, if you honour him equally with the impious.

ANT. For not in aught a slave, but my brother he fell.

CR. Laying waste at least this land, but the other resisting in its defence.

ANT. Still the grave at least desires equal laws.

CR. But not the good to obtain an equal share with the bad.

<sup>y</sup> “*He was*. The original is, ‘he was my brother by the same father, and by the same mother.’—The Greek writers, though generally concise, are sometimes very prolix, as in the passage before us, where the sentiment takes up a whole line in the original, and is better expressed in these two words of the translation.” Francklin. This notable person, since he had not the taste to perceive the elegance of the original, may make himself as happy as he pleases with his two monosyllables. After having the presumption to think himself qualified to improve upon Sophocles, we cannot help suggesting that he might have devised something much more sublime than the subject of his self-congratulatory comment, the boasted *he was*.

ANT. Who knows if these things are held holy below ?

CR. Never at all is the enemy, not even in death, a friend<sup>2</sup>.

ANT. I have been formed by nature not to join in hatred, but to join in love.

CR. Going now below, if you must love, love them ; but while I live, a woman shall not rule.

CH. And in truth before the gates here comes Ismene, letting fall the tears of a sister's love, and the cloud on her brow bedewing her beauteous face, mars the glow of her cheek.

CR. But you, who in my house, like a viper, stealing on without my notice, sucked my blood, and I was not aware that I nursed two fiends and traitors to subvert my throne, come, tell me, do you too confess that you shared in this burial, or do you deny the knowledge of it ?

#### ISMENE.

I did the deed, if she also says so, and I participate in and bear the blame<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Euripides, following a much more natural and amiable sentiment than this expressed by Creon, makes Polynices with his last breath speak kindly of his brother.

φίλος γὰρ ἐχθρὸς ἐγένετ', ἀλλ' ὅμως φίλος.

Phœnissæ, 1445.

<sup>a</sup> Ismene, whose conduct and sentiments we have always hitherto found disgusting, continues to appear here in a still more unfavourable light. She would fain take the seeming credit of generosity, and yet at the very first moment she insinuates her innocence, or at least extorts from Antigone, by her saving clause, an acknowledgment to this effect.

ANT. But justice will not permit you to do this, since you neither were willing, nor did I make you my partner.

ISM. But in your evils I am not ashamed to make myself a fellow-voyager of your sufferings.

ANT. Whose deed it is, Hades and those below the earth are conscious: but I do not love a friend that loves with words.

ISM. Do not, sister, deprive me of the honour of dying with you, and of paying the rites to the dead.

ANT. Do not you die along with me, nor make yours what you did not touch. I will suffice to die.

ISM. And what life is dear to me, bereft of you?

ANT. Ask Creon; for you court him.

ISM. Why do you pain me with this, being yourself nothing benefited by it?

ANT. Yet I am grieved, in truth, though I deride you.

ISM. In what else could I now benefit you?

ANT. Preserve yourself: I do not grudge your escape.

ISM. Woe is me, unhappy! And do I fail to share your fate?

ANT. For you indeed chose to live, but I to die.

ISM. But not at least without my warning being addressed.

ANT. You indeed did well: but to these I appeared to be wise<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> The scholiast makes *τοῖσδε* refer either to Antigone's own sentiments, or to law and justice. There are fifty other things that would do quite as well; for, to tell the truth, the noun to be supplied is not sufficiently obvious.

ISM. And, in truth, the guilt is equal to us.

ANT. Be confident : you indeed live, but my soul has long since died, so as to aid the dead.

CR. I say, as to these two virgins, that the one has just appeared mad, and the other from the time she was first born.

ISM. For never, O king, does the mind which may have originally sprung, remain the same to those in misfortune, but is changed.

CR. To you, at any rate, it did, when you chose to work evil with the evil.

ISM. For how is life to be endured by me alone, without her ?

CR. But do not say *her*, for she is no longer.

ISM. But will you kill the bride of your own son ?

CR. For the furrows of other women may be ploughed.

ISM. Not so, at least, as the union existed between him and her.

CR. I hate bad wives for my sons.

ISM. O dearest Hæmon, how your father dishonours you !

CR. You at least give me too much trouble, both you and the marriage you talk of.

ISM. For will you deprive your own son of her ?

CR. The grave was destined to put a stop to this marriage.

ISM. It is decreed, it would appear, that she shall die.

CR. And so it is for you too, and for me<sup>c</sup>. Make no

<sup>c</sup> This is the scholiast's interpretation, and it appears the most natural construction that can be put upon the words. Brunck takes it differently :

more delay<sup>d</sup>, but conduct her, ye slaves, within; and from this time it is fitting that these women should not be left at liberty, for even the bold fly, when they already see the close of life near.

CH<sup>e</sup>. Blessed of heaven are they, to whom there is a being that hath not tasted of misfortune; for to whomsoever their house shall have been shaken with vengeance from heaven, nought of visitation is wanting, advancing through the long line of posterity; like as when the billow of the ocean brine, (when darkness beneath the surface of the sea sweeps along on the furious blasts of Thrace,) rolls from the bottom of the deep the black and storm-tost sand, and the wave-lashed shores resound with the roar. I see the ancient sufferings of the house of Labdacus falling on the sufferings of the dead; nor does one generation quit the race<sup>f</sup>, but some one of the gods keeps overthrowing it, nor has it a moment's release. For now a light was spread above the last root in the house of Œdipus, and then again the bloody sickle of the infernal powers sweeps it away, and frenzy of words, and the fury of the breast. O Jove! what mortal shall, by transcending, controul thy

"Ita mihi tibi que videtur;" thus making what was conditional in the first instance, direct in the second. Erfurdt has it not much better: "Et tibi et mihi decretum est, i. e. recte conjicis Antigonæ supplicium a me constitui."

<sup>d</sup> Τριβὰς is governed by ποιεῖτε or ἄγετε, or some such word understood. Musgrave very well remarks, that there is no more fitting occasion for an ellipsis, than when the haste of an angry man is to be painted.

<sup>e</sup> This chorus is enriched with some of the most sublime imagery and conception to be met with in any poet. The lines, in particular, which celebrate the power of Jupiter, are grand beyond expression.

<sup>f</sup> "Atone for, or pay the reckoning of the race."

power, which neither the sleep which leads the universe to decay, ever seizes, nor the unwearied months of the gods? Undecaying through time, enthroned in might, thou dwellest mid the effulgent blaze of heaven! For the future, and the instant, and the past, this law will suffice: nothing comes to the life of mortals far removed at least from calamity. For deceitful hope is a joy to many, and to many the beguilements of light-minded love; but ruin advances on man, all-ignorant, before that he touch his foot with the warm fire. In wisdom hath an illustrious saying been by some one revealed: That evil on a time appears good to him, whose mind the god hurries on to judgment, and that he lives for a brief space apart from its visitation.

But here is Hæmon, the youngest by birth of your children. Does he come, lamenting the fate of his betrothed bride Antigone, grieving at being defrauded of the nuptials?

CR. We shall soon know better than prophets. O my son! having then heard the ratified decree against your bride, do you come, raging against your father? or are we, in whatever way acting, dear to you?

#### HÆMON.

Father, I am thine; and you, having good counsels for me, which I will follow, direct me aright. For no marriage will justly be considered greater with me than you, while guiding me well.

CR. For thus, O my son, it is fitting to feel in your breast that every thing takes its place behind the judgment of a father; for on account of this men pray that, begetting children, they may have them obedient in



their house, in order that they may both repay an enemy with evil<sup>g</sup>, and honour a friend equally with their father. But whosoever begets useless children, what would you say that he did else than engender toils to himself, and much laughter to his enemies. Do not you now, my son, for the sake of a woman, ever drive away your senses by pleasure, knowing that this is a chilling embrace, a bad wife, the partner of your bed at home. For what worse ulcer could there be than a false friend? But, spurning her as an enemy, suffer this virgin to marry some one in the shades<sup>h</sup>. For since I have clearly discovered her alone of all the city acting with disobedience, I will not prove myself false to my country, but will put her to death. Let her therefore invoke Jove, the god of kindred; for if I rear those who are my natural kin disorderly, much more shall I thus rear those who are not connected with me; for whosoever is a good man in his own family, will also be shewn to be just in the state; but whosoever acts with violence in transgressing the laws, or thinks to command those in power, it is impossible that he should meet with praise from me. But whom the city may appoint, him it is proper to obey in small things or in great, just or unjust; and this man I am confident would rule well and would be willing to be well ruled,

<sup>g</sup> There is a strong resemblance in this to the sentiments, not to say the language, of the Psalmist: "Like as arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are young children: happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate." Ps. cxxvii. 5, 6.

<sup>h</sup> Creon, it appears, had not been informed that neither "marrying nor giving in marriage" went on there.

and in the tempest of the spear would remain at his post a just and brave companion in arms. There is no greater bane than anarchy; it destroys cities, lays houses low, and in the combat of the spear scatters the rout: but discipline preserves the most of those who are under rule. There must thus be aid given to those that govern, and we must by no means yield to a woman; for it were better, if necessary, to be vanquished by a man, and we would not be called inferior to women.

CH. To us indeed, if we have not suffered the depredations of time, you seem to speak wisely concerning what you speak.

HÆ. Father, the gods implant wisdom in man, the highest of all possessions as many as exist. But I should neither be able nor know to express that you do not say these things aright. For another indeed it might be proper<sup>i</sup>. For your interest, then, I have been accustomed to consider every thing that any one says or does, or has to blame: for your eye terrifies a common citizen from using those words which you would not be pleased to hear; but I, in the shade, can hear them, in what way the city mourns for this virgin; how she, the most undeservedly of all women, perishes by the most wretched death, after most glorious deeds; she who did not suffer her own brother, having fallen in the slaughter unburied, to be destroyed by ravening

<sup>i</sup> Such is the interpretation of Heath: "*Fieri quidem id possit ab alio (qui filius non sit tuus) et quidem non indecore.*" Hæmon delicately insinuates that the conduct of his father is objectionable, but will not allow himself, from filial respect, to give vent to unbecoming censure. Brunck's translation bears about as much relation to the original, as it does to sense and intelligibility: "*Est tamen ut alius etiam vera dicere queat.*"

dogs, nor by any bird. Is not she worthy of gaining golden honour? Such a hidden report makes its way on in silence. To me, father, there is no possession more honourable than your prosperity; for what is a greater ornament of glory to children than a father flourishing? or what to a father than his children? Do not now bear this one disposition of mind only in yourself, that what you say, and nothing else, is right; for whosoever thinks that he himself alone has wisdom, or a tongue, or a soul, such as no other, these men, when laid open, have been seen to be empty. But it is no disgrace to a man, even though he be wise, to learn many things, and not to strive too much against others. You see by the channels of winter streams how as many trees as yield preserve their boughs; but those that resist perish with the very root. And in like manner, whoever managing a ship, having drawn firm the sail-rope, gives no way; he upsetting her, navigates for the future with benches turned upside down. But yield from your anger, and grant a change. For if there is any judgment with me too, though a younger man, I say, that it is far the best for a man to be by nature full of knowledge; but if not, for it is not wont to incline in this way, it is also honourable to learn from those that advise well<sup>k</sup>.

<sup>k</sup> There is a passage very similar to this in Hesiod, which the readers of Aristotle will remember quoted in the first book of the Ethics:—

Κεῖνος μὲν πανάριστος, ὃς αὐτὸς πάντα νοήσει  
 Φρασσάμενος τὰ κ' ἔπειτα καὶ ἐς τέλος ἦσιν ἀμείνω·  
 Ἐσθλὸς δ' αὖ καὶ κεῖνος, ὃς εὖ εἰπόντι πίθηται.  
 Ὅς δὲ κε μήτ' αὐτὸς νοίῃ, μήτ' ἄλλου ἀκούων  
 Ἐν θυμῷ βάλλεται, ὃδ' αὖτ' ἀχρήσιος ἀνὴρ.

Hesiod. *Ἔργ.* 290.

CH. O king! it is fair, if he speak to the purpose, that you should learn from him; and you, Hæmon, again from your father: for it has been well spoken on both sides.

CR. Shall we, of such an age, be taught wisdom by one of his time of life?

HÆ. Nothing which is not just; but, if I am a young man, it is not fitting to regard years more than works.

CR. For is it a good work to pay regard to those who are guilty of disobedience?

HÆ. No, nor would I desire you to observe reverence towards the bad.

CR. For has not she been seized with such a disease?

HÆ. The people that dwell together in this city of Thebe deny it.

CR. Shall the city dictate to me what it is proper for me to ordain?

HÆ. Do you see how you have spoken this like a very young man?

CR. For does it become any other one than me to rule this land?

HÆ. Nay, that is not a state which is dependent on one man.

CR. Is not the state deemed the possession of its ruler?

HÆ. No doubt:—in an uninhabited land at least you might rule alone.

CR. He, as it appears, fights in alliance with a woman.

HÆ. If you are a woman; for my care is for you.

CR. Oh, utterly basest of wretches! quarrelling with your father!

HÆ. For I see you committing the sin of injustice.

CR. Do I sin in paying reverence to my own dominion?

HÆ. You do not pay reverence when trampling under foot at least the honours of the gods.

CR. Oh, accursed disposition, and enslaved to a woman!

HÆ. You will not, at all events, ever find me the slave of what is base.

CR. All your speech at least is for her.

HÆ. And for you too, and for me, and for the gods below the earth.

CR. It may not be that you should ever now marry her in life.

HÆ. She then will die, and, dying, will destroy some one<sup>1</sup>.

CR. Do you also, threatening, thus advance in audacity?

HÆ. And what threat is it to argue against foolish opinions?

CR. To your cost you shall school me, being yourself void of understanding.

HÆ. If you were not my father, I would have said that you were a fool.

CR. Being the slave of a woman, do not revile me<sup>m</sup>.

HÆ. Do you wish to utter some reproach, and uttering it, to hear nothing in return?

<sup>1</sup> Creon evidently supposes that Hæmon threatens his life, mistaking what is an ambiguous intimation of his purpose of destroying himself.

<sup>m</sup> Κῶτ' ἄλλω generally means *adulor*, but here it is necessarily taken in an opposite sense. This mode of using the same word in a directly contrary signification is not uncommon. "Ονειδος is a marked instance of it: Θήβαις κάλλιστον ὄνειδος. Eur. Phœn. 821.

CR. Can this be true?—but know, by Olympus, that you shall not with impunity insult me with your upbraidings. Bring the hateful woman, that she may immediately die in the presence of her bridegroom, near him, and before his face.

HÆ. Never, near me at least, dream not this, shall she perish; and you shall no longer, beholding it with your eyes, see my face, since, in your intercourse with those who wish to be your friends, you act the part of a madman.

CH. The man, O king! has departed abruptly in anger; and the mind, when pained at his years, is dreadful.

CR. Let him do what he pleases; let him, going, feel prouder thoughts than become a mortal: but he shall not release these virgins from their fate.

CH. For do you intend to kill both of them?

CR. Not her at least who did not touch the body, for you certainly suggest this well.

CH. And by what sort of death do you meditate to destroy her?

CR. Conducting her where the way is untrodden by mortals, I will bury her alive in the cavern of the rock<sup>n</sup>, only setting forth so much food as will suffice for expiation°, in order that all the city may avoid the pollu-

<sup>n</sup> “ In arcam inclusos tradunt non dissimili genere pœnæ Danaën : Cycni liberos, (Lycophr. 239.) Comatam, (Theocrit. vii. 78.) denique Sotadem poetam, (Athen. xiv. cap. 4.)” *Musgrave*.

° It is singular that in all cases of this live-burial, either ancient or modern, we find the custom prevail of leaving a certain quantity of food with the victim. In Greece it was held impious to suffer any one to die of famine, and this was a kind of juggling way of satisfying the conscience that

tion. There, imploring Pluto, whom alone of gods she reveres, she will obtain a respite from death, or will know at least then that it is lost trouble to pay reverence to those in the shades.

## CHORUS.

O Love invincible! irresistible Love! who lightest on wealth<sup>p</sup>, who makest thy couch in the soft cheeks<sup>q</sup> of the damsel in her youth, and roamest beyond the sea, and mid the rural cots, thee shall neither any of the immortals escape, nor of men the creatures of a day<sup>r</sup>:

the pollution was avoided. In modern times the practice seems to have been continued with the cruel object of prolonging the torments of such a horrible existence.

<sup>p</sup> There have been a great many notes wasted on the word *κτῆμασι* in the text, and a great many emendations proposed, in which Brunck may be safely allowed to have borne the palm for absurdity. The whole quarrel of his tribe, with the word, is indeed quite unnecessary and unreasonable. They allege that love does not select wealth more than poverty for his object, and on this weak ground take a decided stand against the poet. Even though their doctrine were true, it is of no consequence in this point, where the description is in division of the all-pervading power: but there are two lines, which are sadly opposite to their theoretical nonsense, quoted by Musgrave, from Seneca, Hippol. 208.

Cur in penates rarius tenues subit  
Hæc delicatas eligens pestis domos?

<sup>q</sup> ————— Chia

Pulchris excubat in genis. Horace.

<sup>r</sup> We may safely put in contrast with this chorus, though highly beautiful, the following lines, on the same subject, from one of the first of modern poets:

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;  
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;  
In halls, in gay attire is seen;  
In hamlets, dances on the green.  
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,  
And men below, and saints above;  
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

Lay of the Last Minstrel, Canto iii. 2.

but he that feels thee is that instant maddened. Thou for their ruin seducest the minds of the just to injustice : thou hast stirred up this strife of kindred men, and desire revealed from the eyes of the beauteous bride wins the victory, desire that holds its seat beside the mighty laws in heaven's rule ; for the goddess Venus wantons unopposed amongst all. But now already I too am borne without the pale of laws, beholding this spectacle ; and I am no longer able to restrain the fountains of tears, when I here see Antigone passing on her way to the chamber where all repose.

ANT. Behold me, ye citizens of the land of my fathers, advancing on this last journey, and beholding the light of the sun for this last time and never again ; but Orcus, whose chamber receives all, conducts me, living, to the shore of Acheron, neither blessed with the lot of wedlock<sup>s</sup>, nor hath the nuptial lay been chanted for me, but I shall be the bride of Acheron.

CH. Therefore in renown and enjoying praise you descend to this sepulchre of the dead, neither struck by wasting disease, nor having received the award of the sword ; but in freedom and in life you alone of mortals shall descend to the shades.

ANT. I have heard that, by a most mournful fate, perished, on the promontory of Sipylus, the Phrygian

<sup>s</sup> Antigone, in these beautiful and swan-like dirges, more than once expresses her regret for never having experienced the marriage joys. There is nothing indelicate, except to the eye of false refinement, in this candid declaration of natural feeling. We find an equally pure illustration of the same sentiment in the case of Jephtha's daughter, who went "and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains." Her example was even admired ; for "it was a custom in Israel, that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephtha the Gileadite four days in a year." Judges xi.



stranger<sup>t</sup>, daughter of Tantalus. Her, like the clinging ivy, did the shoots of rock subdue; and her, dissolving away in showers, as the legends of mortals tell, the snow never leaves; and from her eyes, that ever flow with tears, she bedews the cliffs. Like her, the god lulls me to sleep.

CH. But she was a goddess, and of heavenly birth; and we are mortals, and of mortals born. And yet to you, a perishable creature, it is high fame to meet with a lot like the peers of the gods.

ANT. Woe is me! I am derided. Why, by the gods of my fathers, do you insult me, not yet dead, but still on earth? O my country! O my countrymen, high in wealth! O ye fountains of Dirce, and grove of Thebe, the renowned for the car! I take you withal jointly to witness, how unlamented by my friends, and by what laws I go to the sepulchral dungeon of my untimely tomb. O, woe is me! who am neither a dweller among men nor shades, the living nor the dead.

CH. Having advanced to the extreme of audacity, thou hast violently dashed, my child, against the lofty throne of justice. Thou payest some penalty of thy father.

ANT. Thou hast touched on a sorrow the most painful to me, the well-known griefs of my father, and the fate of all our race, the illustrious children of Labdacus. Woe! for the curses that attended my mother's bed,

<sup>t</sup> Niobe, who was changed into stone for having bragged Latona with her children. Agathius, an old quaint fool, has the following lines on this *hard* punishment:

Ὁ τύμβος οὗτος ἔνδον, οὐκ ἔχει νέκυν,

Ὁ νεκρὸς οὗτος ἔκτος οὐκ ἔχει τάφον.

the incestuous connection of my wretched mother with my father, from which I, unhappy, formerly sprung; and now, doomed to ruin, and unblessed by nuptials, I depart to sojourn with my parents. O my brother! having met with an ill-fated marriage<sup>a</sup>, you destroy in your death me, still in life!

CH. To pay such reverence indeed to the dead, is a token of piety; but power, to whomsoever power is intrusted, must not in any way be transgressed. Thy self-willed temper has destroyed thee.

ANT. Unwept, and friendless, and unwedded, I, wretched, am conducted on this destined way. It is no longer allowed me, unhappy, to look on this sacred eye of the blazing sun; and no friend laments over my deeply wretched doom.

CR. Know ye not that no one would cease from dirges and wailings before death, if it were of avail to utter them? Will ye not conduct her as quickly as possible, and depart, having enclosed her, as I directed, by herself alone in the caverned tomb? whether it is fated she shall die or lead a sepulchral life in such a dwelling. For we are free from pollution as respects this virgin, and she then shall be deprived of abode in upper air.

ANT. O tomb! O bridal chamber! O hollow dwelling! that must ever contain me, where I go to my own, of whom slain Proserpine has received the greatest number among the dead, and of whom I descend the last,

<sup>a</sup> Polynices wedded the daughter of Adrastus, king of Argos; and being, from this powerful alliance, induced to undertake the expedition against Thebes, he met with his own death, and entailed a still more wretched fate on his sister.

and by a fate far the most wretched, before having fulfilled my term of life ! Departing, however, I strongly nourish the hope that I shall come dear to my father, and dear to thee, my mother, and dear to thee, O face of my brother ; since I, with my own hand, washed you when dead, and decked you out, and poured the libations over your tomb : and now, Polynices, having buried your body, I gain such a reward. And yet, in the opinion of those who have just sentiments, I honoured you aright. For neither, though I had been the mother of children, nor though my husband dying, had mouldered away, would I have undertaken this toil against the will of the citizens. On account of what law do I say this ? There would have been another husband for me if the first died, and if I lost my child there would have been another from another man ; but my father and my mother being laid in the grave, it is impossible a brother should ever be born to me<sup>x</sup>. On the principle of such a law, having preferred you, my brother, to all other considerations, I seemed to Creon to commit a sin, and to dare what was dreadful. And now, seizing me by force, he thus leads me away, having never enjoyed the nuptial bed,

<sup>x</sup> There is a story in Herodotus, of this very principle having been acted upon. The whole family of Intaphernes being condemned to death, his wife prevailed on Darius, by her lamentations, to grant her the life of one of her kindred. She chose to save her brother, and gave the same reasons as Antigone for neglecting her husband and children. The two ladies may reason very subtilly on the point, but the principle they go upon is evidently false. The original institution, that “ a man should leave his father and his mother, and should cleave unto his wife,” is no less agreeable to nature, than to reason and revelation. The example of Alcestis will always be more admired than that of the wife of Intaphernes.

nor heard the nuptial lay, nor having gained the lot of marriage, nor of rearing my children; but thus I, an unhappy woman, deserted by my friends, go, while alive, to the cavern of the dead. Having transgressed, —what justice of the gods? what need is there for me, a miserable wretch, to look any longer to the gods? What ally can I invoke, since at least by observing piety, I have obtained the reward of impiety? But if these things be approved of by the gods, by suffering, we may be made conscious of our error; but if my enemies be guilty, may they not suffer more evils than they unjustly inflict on me.

CH. The same fury of the same tempest of the soul still possesses her.

CR. Tears, therefore, shall arise to those who conduct her, for their slowness.

ANT. Woe is me! this command has come close upon death.

CR. I give you no hope to console you that these things shall not be consummated in this way.

ANT. O my native city of the land of Thebe, and gods of my father's race, I am hurried along, and have no more respite. Behold, ye rulers of Thebes, the last remaining of the royal race, what deeds I suffer at the hands of what men for having revered religion.

CH. The form of Danae<sup>r</sup>, too, submitted to bid farewell to the light of heaven; in dungeons secured with brass, and concealed in a sepulchral chamber, she was

<sup>r</sup> The Chorus, in this wild and beautiful strain, console Antigone with the enumeration of other fates as wretched as her own. It has been well enough observed, that the examples they quote of Danae and Lycurgus, are not compared to her in their crimes, but their sufferings.

bowed to the yoke of necessity. And yet she was honoured in her race, my child, my child, and cherished the seed of Jove, that flowed in golden shower. But there is a certain marvellous power of fate. Neither tempest, nor war, nor towers, nor black ships, that dash through the sea, escape its control. To that yoke, too, was bowed the fiery son of Dryas<sup>z</sup>, king of the Edonians, being prisoned by Bacchus for his virulent temper in the bonds of rock; and thus he distils the dreadful venom of madness, ever bursting up afresh. He knew, when too late, that he had glanced at the god in his frenzy with reviling words. For he would have put a stop to the inspired maids and the mystic flame; and chafed the Muses, the lovers of song. By the Cyanean deeps of the double sea, the shores of the Bosphorus, and the Thracian Salmydessus, (where Mars dwells near their cities,) saw the accursed wound, inflicted with blindness, on the two sons of Phineus, by a fell step-mother<sup>a</sup>, a darkening wound, imprinted on the wretched balls of their eyes, with bloody hands, by the spear, and the points of the shuttle: and pining away in misery, they wept the wretched sufferings of their mother, who bore the children of an ill-fated marriage. But she owned the seed of the sons of Erectheus<sup>b</sup>, of ancient

<sup>z</sup> The son of Dryas was Lycurgus, who, having routed the Bacchanalians from his territory, was punished by their god with some severe doom, here described as imprisonment, but variously related by various authors.

<sup>a</sup> Idaia, who barbarously put out the eyes of Plexippus and Pandion, the sons of Phineus, by his first wife Cleopatra.

<sup>b</sup> Her mother Orithyia was the daughter of Erectheus, and wife of Boreas. It was on this claim of kindred that the Athenians, in obedience to the oracle, asked the aid of their son-in-law Boreas during the Persian invasion.

lineage; and in far distant caves was nursed, amid the storms of her father, a daughter of Boreas<sup>c</sup>, rivalling the steed in swiftness, as she bounded over the lofty mountains, child of heaven; but even over her, my daughter, the eternal Fates prevailed.

TIRESIAS.

Ye princes of Thebes, we come on this common way, two seeing by one, for the journey of the blind is made by a guide.

CR. But what new event, O aged Tiresias, has happened?

TIR. I will teach you, and do you obey the prophet.

CR. I was not formerly wont to depart from your advice.

TIR. Wherefore you direct aright the helm of this state.

CR. I testify the advantages I have experienced.

TIR. Consider that you now again stand on the very edge of fortune.

CR. What is it? How I shudder at your words!

TIR. You shall know, hearing the signs of my art. For, sitting down on my ancient augural seat, where was my station for all augury, I hear an unknown sound of birds, beating the air with ill-omened and unwonted fury, and I perceived that they were tearing each other with bloody talons; for the clashing of their wings gave clear indication. Being alarmed, I straightway essayed the divination by fire on the blazing altars; and from

<sup>c</sup> Βορέας, ἄδως, a patronymic appellation for a nymph descended from Boreas.

the sacrifice the flame burst not forth, but on the ashes a clammy vapour kept oozing from the thighs, and burnt up, and sputtered, and the entrails were scattered in air, and the thighs<sup>d</sup>, melting away, fell out from the involving cawl. Such expiring<sup>e</sup> bodings of mysterious rites I learned from this boy; for he is a guide to me, and I to others. And the city is afflicted with this from your determination: for our altars, and all our hearths, are full of birds and dogs, feeding on the body of the wretched son of Œdipus; and the gods no longer accept from us the sacrificial prayer, nor the flame of the thighs; nor does bird send forth the notes of propitious omen, being gorged with the fat of human gore. These things, therefore, my son, consider; for it is common to all men to err: but when one may err, he is no longer an unwise nor an infatuated man, who, having fallen into evil, is cured, nor remains immoveable. Obstinacy incurs the imputation of folly. War not with the fallen, nor wound the dead. What prowess is it to slay the slain? Being well-disposed towards you, I advise you well; and it is most pleasing to learn from a good adviser, if his advice bring advantage.

CR. Old man, ye all, like archers at a mark, discharge your shafts at me; and I am not unacquainted with the arts of prophets, by the race of whom I have

<sup>d</sup> The thighs were the part of the sacrifice appropriated to the gods, because, says Eustathius, they are useful to men for walking and generation. It is clear enough that the thighs are considerably useful in these important functions, but why for this reason they should be peculiarly acceptable to the gods is by no means so obvious.

<sup>e</sup> Φθινοντ', evanescentia. Mali ominis erat in ignispiciis quicquid debile et evanidum erat. Musgrave.

long since been made the subject of barter and traffic. Pursue your gain, make your purchase, if you choose, of the amber of Sardis, and the gold of India; but him ye shall never enclose in the tomb; not even though the eagles of Jove, seizing him as their prey, should bear him to the throne of the god; not even thus, dreading the pollution, would I permit his burial. For I well know that no mortal is able to pollute the gods. But, O aged Tiresias, even those men who are clever in many things, meet with disgraceful falls, when, for the sake of gain, they plead speciously a base argument.

TIR. Ha! Does any man know, does he consider——

CR. What is the matter? What trite saying is this?

TIR. By how much wisdom is the best of possessions?

CR. By so much, methinks, as folly is the greatest bane.

TIR. You, however, are by nature full of this malady.

CR. I do not wish to reply with reproach to a prophet.

TIR. And yet you do, saying that I prophesy what is false.

CR. For all the race of prophets are lovers of gain.

TIR. But that of kings loves base gain.

CR. Do you know that you address what you say to your rulers?

TIR. I know it; for having preserved by my means this city, you sway it.



CR. You are a skilful prophet, but given to injustice.

TIR. You will force me to utter the secrets that lie unmoved in my breast.

CR. Move them, only do not speak for gain.

TIR. For thus do I already seem to have spoken, as far as regards your part?

CR. Know that you shall not sell my resolution.

TIR. But do you too know well, that you shall not any longer see to their end many hastening courses of the sun, before that yourself repay one sprung from your own bowels, dead, a recompense for the dead, in return for having sent one who was in upper air below the earth, and dishonourably made a living being to dwell in the tomb, and for having on the other hand detained here one debarred from intercourse with the infernal deities, and deprived of funeral obsequies an unhallowed corse; in which things, neither any concern appertains to you, nor to the gods above. But these things are done with violent injustice by you; for this, the Furies of Orcus and of the gods, avenging with penal consequence, lie in ambush for you, that you may be enthralled by the same misfortunes. See if, induced by money, I prophesy this: for the lapse of no long time shall exhibit the mourning of men and women in your palace; and all the states shall be stirred up together in enmity<sup>f</sup>, the mangled bodies of whose citizens

<sup>f</sup> Those states that had joined in the expedition, and whose dead were all left unburied. Their being stirred up in enmity is a prophetic allusion to the expedition of the Epigoni, who conquered Thebes to revenge the misfortunes of their fathers before its walls.

the dogs have polluted, or wild beasts, or any winged bird, bearing an unhallowed stench to the altars of the city. Such unerring arrows, since you pain me, I have discharged, like an archer, in anger from my soul, and their warm smart you shall not escape. But do you, boy, conduct me home, that he may vent his passion upon those of fewer years, and may know to nurse a more temperate tongue, and feelings better than the mind he now bears.

CH. The man, O king, has departed, having predicted dreadful events; and I know, from the time that I changed this hair into white from black, that he never once declared to the city what was false.

CR. I also have known it, and I am disturbed in my thoughts: but to yield were cowardly; and there is danger that, by resisting, I afflict my mind with calamity.

CH. There is need, O Creon, son of Menœceus, of prudent counsel.

CR. What, in truth, is it requisite to do? Tell me, and I will obey.

CH. Going, release the virgin from her subterraneous abode, and prepare a tomb for the body that lies exposed.

CR. And do you approve of this, and think I ought to yield?

CH. Aye, and as quickly too, O king, as possible; for the swift-footed vengeance of heaven cuts short those who are of wicked minds.

CR. Ah me! it is with difficulty indeed, but still I am changed from my purpose to do it. We must not maintain an unequal combat with necessity.

CH. Going, now, do these things; do not entrust them to others.

CR. Thus, as I am, I will go. But ye attendants, both present and absent, taking axes in your hands, rush to the conspicuous spot; and since my opinion has been converted in this way, as I myself bound her, so, being present, I will set her at liberty; for I fear lest it be not best, preserving the established laws, to close life.

### CHORUS.

O thou, who art hailed by many a name<sup>g</sup>, glory of the Theban nymph, and son of deeply-thundering Jove, who swayest renowned Italia, and presidest o'er the rites of Ceres, in the vales of Eleusis, open to all! O Bacchus, who dwellest in Thebe, the mother city of the Bacchanals, by the flowing streams of Ismenus, and the fields where the teeth of the fell dragon were sown; thee, the smoke beheld as it burst into flame above the double-crested rock<sup>h</sup>, where roam the Corycian

<sup>g</sup> Bacchus was rich in names, chiefly derived from his attributes. They were Lyæus, Lenæus, Bassereus, Bromius, Euius, Eleleus, Dithyrambus, and fifty others.

<sup>h</sup> *στέροψ*—*λιγνός*, *lucidus*, *vel candens*, *fulgidus vapor*. Musgrave. This smoke or flame, or both, which denoted the presence or approach of the god on the summits of Parnassus, is frequently celebrated by the poets.

ὦ λαμποῦσα πέτρα πυρὸς  
 δικόρυφον σέλας, ὑπὲρ ἀκρων  
 Βακχεῖων.

Eurip. *Phœnissæ*, 237.

— ἐνθα πῦρ πηδᾷ θεοῦ  
 Βακχεῖων.

Eurip. *Ion*, 1125.

nymphs<sup>i</sup>, the votaries of Bacchus, and the fount of Castalia flows; and thee the ivy-crowned steeps of the Nysian mountains<sup>k</sup>, and the green shore, clothed with vines, send along amid immortal words, that sound thy acclaim, to reign the guardian of the streets of Thebe, whom you honour highest of all cities, along with your mother that perished by the thunder. And now, since the city with all its people is enthralled by a violent disease, come with healing steps, over the slopes of Parnassus, or the resounding gulf of the sea<sup>l</sup>. O leader of the choir of flame-breathing stars<sup>m</sup>, director of the voices that sound by night, youthful god, son of Jove, reveal thyself along with thy ministering Mœnads, the Naxian maids, who, maddening through the live-long night, celebrate thee with the dance, thee their lord Iacchus.

#### MESSENGER.

Ye inhabitants of the abodes of Cadmus and Amphion, it is impossible that I should ever praise or blame the life of man in whatever condition it may be: for Fortune always raises, and Fortune casts down the prosperous and the unprosperous; and no one is prescient of what is decreed for mortals. For Creon once, as appeared to me, was enviable, having preserved this

<sup>i</sup> So called from the Corycian grotto, their consecrated abode at the foot of mount Parnassus.

<sup>k</sup> There were various mountains of this name. Nysa, in Eubœa, is supposed to be the one alluded to here.

<sup>l</sup> Crossing from Eubœa to Bœotia.

<sup>m</sup> Some take these words literally, others regard them as figurative of the torches borne by the Bacchanals.

land of Cadmus from the enemy, and receiving the complete dominion of the country, he directed it, happily flourishing with a noble race of children; and now all is gone. For when a man loses the pleasures of life, I do not consider him to live, but look upon him as the living dead. Let him have great wealth, if you choose, in his house, and live with the outward splendour of a king; but if joy be wanting to these, I would not purchase the rest with the shadow of smoke compared with real pleasure.

CH. What burden of sorrow on our princes is this again, that you come to tell?

MESS. They are dead: and the living are guilty of their death.

CH. And who was the slayer? and who is the slain?—speak.

MESS. Hæmon has perished, and by a suicidal hand he is dyed with blood.

CH. Whether by his father's hand, or by his own<sup>n</sup>?

MESS. Himself, by his own hand, being angry with his father on account of the murder.

CH. O prophet! how you have correctly declared this prediction!

MESS. As these things being so, you may deliberate on the rest.

<sup>n</sup> The ignorance of fat-brained commentators has led them to make a row about this question being put by the Chorus, after the messenger had announced the death of Hæmon by his own hand. The scholiast, simple soul, will have it, that the Chorus, in their agitation, heard no more than the words, "Hæmon has perished." Musgrave and Heath blunder in an equally pitiable manner. Any one who had read ten lines of Greek poetry, ought to have known that the dying by a kindred hand was considered and spoken of as suicide.

CH. And in truth I see near at hand the wretched Eurydice, wife of Creon; and having either heard of her son, or by chance, she is passing from the palace.

## EURYDICE.

O all ye citizens, I heard the rumour, at least, as I was going out in order that I might repair to the temple of the goddess Pallas, her suppliant in prayer; and I chance to be undoing the bars of the fastened gate, and the voice of domestic affliction strikes my ears. Moved by terror, I fall prostrate in the arms of my attendants, and faint away. But whatever was the tale, repeat it: for not untried by misfortune, I shall hear it.

MESS. I, my dear mistress, being present, will tell it, and I will not omit a word of the truth. For why should I alleviate that to you in which I should afterwards be detected of falsehood? The truth is always right. I followed your husband an attendant on foot to the extremity of the plain, where still lay the un-pitied body of Polynices, mangled by dogs; and him, indeed, having implored the goddess that is placed in the highways<sup>o</sup> and Pluto to have propitious dispositions, we bathed with holy lavations, and having consumed what remained of the body, with fresh-plucked boughs, and piled<sup>d</sup> up a lofty barrow of his native soil, we again repair to the rocky cavern, the bridal chamber of the grave's betrothed. And some one hears at a distance the voice of loud lament beside that unconsecrated chamber, and hastening he tells it to our master,

<sup>o</sup> Trivia, Hecate, or Proserpine.

Creon: but round him, as he approached nearer, there float the indistinct notes of wretched wailings, and shrieking, he utters these mournful words: "O unhappy me! am I then a true prophet? Do I now advance on the most ill-fated way of all that I have gone before? The voice of my son movingly falls upon me. Go with speed, ye attendants, nearer, and standing by the tomb, ascertain (having entered by the very mouth the barrier of the mound where the stone is drawn aside) if I hear the voice of Hæmon, or am deceived by the gods." On the command of our desponding master we examined the place, and we see in the extremity of the tumulus, the virgin, hanging by the neck, suspended in the woven noose of her linen robe, and the youth lying beside her with his arms around her waist, deploring the destruction of his bride below the earth, and the deeds of his father, and his ill-starred nuptials. But Creon, when he sees him, having uttered a dismal groan, goes in towards him, and in the loud tone of grief calls on him: "O wretched man, what sort of deed have you done? What mind had you? In what circumstance of calamity are you ruined? Come forth, my son, suppliant I beseech you." But his son, glaring on him with savage eyes, spitting on his face, and replying nothing, draws his double-edged sword<sup>p</sup>: but his father rushing away in flight, he missed him; then the ill-fated man, enraged with himself, immediately stretch-

<sup>p</sup> Aristotle very justly finds fault with this incident. There is something horrible and unnatural in the attempt of a son to slay his own father; and since he fails to execute his purpose, there is no tragical effect produced. The spectator ought not to be shocked unnecessarily.

ing out<sup>q</sup> the sword, drove it to the middle in his side, and still in possession of his senses, with his enfeebled arm he embraces the virgin<sup>r</sup>; and panting, he sends up the keen gusts of gory drops on her pallid cheek. And the unhappy man lies dead embracing the dead, having obtained his nuptial rites in the mansions of Pluto, a proof to the world of rashness, how it attaches to man the greatest of his ills.

CH. What can you conjecture this to mean? The woman has some time since disappeared before uttering word, good or bad<sup>s</sup>.

MESS. I myself also am astonished; but I live in the hope that, hearing the calamities of her son, she does not deign to make her lamentations public, but within, beneath the roof of the palace, will appoint her maids to mourn a domestic sorrow: for she is not devoid of judgment, so as to commit what is improper.

CH. I know not: for to me, at least, a deep silence seems to portend something grievous, and an excess of clamorous grief to be without consequence.

<sup>q</sup> ἐπενταθείς, pro ἐπεντεινόμενος. Sic, ut erat, ensem intentans. Musgrave.

<sup>r</sup> This description of the two ill-fated lovers, the dying and the dead, contains the very essence of poetry, and tragic beauty. A finer subject for a picture cannot well be imagined.

<sup>s</sup> There is something very striking and fearful in the moody silence of deep passion and despair.

————— δέδοιχ' ὅπως  
μη' κ τῆς σωπῆς τῇσδ' ἀναρρήξει κακά.

(Edip. Tyran. 1074.

A few lines below, the Chorus also express this same feeling of apprehension, arising from the same cause.



MESS. But going within the palace, we will inform ourselves whether she secretly conceals in her enraged heart any unlawful purpose: for your suggestion is good, and there is something grievous in too deep silence.

CH. And in truth here comes the king himself, having a memorable token in his hand<sup>t</sup>, if we may lawfully so say,—no calamity from a foreign source, but he himself its guilty author.

CR. Alas! the irreparable and deadly errors of a perverted mind! O ye, who look on the kindred slayers and the slain! Oh me! for the infatuation of my counsels! O my son! my son! in your youth by an untimely fate, [woe, woe, woe, woe!] thou hast died, thou hast departed by mine, not thy rashness!

CH. Ah me! how you seem too late to perceive justice.

CR. Ah me! I wretched gain it by experience; and on my head the god then dashed with heavy impulse, and drove me on to furious ways; having, alas! overturned to be trampled beneath foot my former joy. Alas! alas! O the toils of mortals! hapless toils!

#### MESSENGER.

O master, how, both having and possessing, you bear

<sup>t</sup> Creon, it would appear from this, comes in, carrying the dead body of Hæmon. Shakespeare, in a similar way, introduces Lear with Cordelia in his arms. This incident is well calculated for stage effect: but the Goths who have mangled Lear for representation, have now left out the scene of "that fair dead daughter."

these evils in your hands, and you seem coming soon about to behold other evils in your palace.

CR. And what, after these calamities, is there still more calamitous?

MESS. Your wife is dead, the full mother of this corpse, in an unhappy fate by wounds just fresh inflicted.

CR. O port of the grave, that no expiation may soothe, why, why do you destroy me? O thou that hast conveyed to me the evil tidings of sorrow, what tale dost thou tell? Alas! alas! thou hast a second time despatched a dead man. What, O man, dost thou say? What new intelligence dost thou deliver? Woe, woe, woe, woe! that the death of my wife by murder is added to the destruction of my son?

MESS. You may behold it; for the body is no longer in the inner recesses.

CR. Woe is me! this other succeeding evil I wretched behold. What then, what fate yet awaits me? I, an unhappy wretch, am already bearing in my arms my son, and I see opposite that other dead body. Alas! alas, O wretched mother! alas, my son!

MESS. She, in keen anger, falling down beside the altar, closes her darkening eyes, having first, indeed, bewailed the illustrious bed of Megareus, who formerly died; and again of him before us; and last, having imprecated a baneful fortune on you the murderer of your children.

CR. Woe, woe, woe, woe! I am fluttered with fear. Why does not some one give me a mortal wound with the double-edged sword? A wretched man am I, alas! alas! and in a wretched fate am I involved.

MESS. As being guilty at least of both the one fate and the other, you were denounced by her as she died.

CR. But in what way did she depart from life in the slaughter?

MESS. Having with her own hand pierced herself below the liver, when she heard the deeply-mournful sufferings of her son.

CR. Woe is me! this guilt will never apply to any other but me: for I, a miserable wretch, I have slain thee: I say the truth. O ye attendants, ye attendants, conduct me, with all speed conduct me without; me who am no more than a nonentity.

CH. You advise what is advantageous, if there be any thing advantageous in misfortunes: for present evils, when shortest, are best.

CR. Let it come, let it come, let the last of my fates appear, bringing most happily to me the close of my days: let it come, let it come, so that I may never behold another day.

MESS. Those things are future: of these things present command what we ought to do; for others are a care to those whom it behoves to have this care.

CR. But I prayed for those things I desire.

MESS. Pray now for nothing; since there is no escape to mortals from predestined calamity.

CR. Lead away now without this shadow of a man, who, O my son, unwillingly slew thee, and thee, too, my wife. O wretched man that I am! I neither know whither nor to whom I should look, nor whither I should turn my steps: for every thing misguided, both in my hands and over my head, has an intolerable fate made to burst upon me.

CH. Wisdom is by far the highest part of happiness : and it behoves us not to be guilty of irreverence in those things at least that concern the gods ; for the haughty words of the vaunting, paying the penalty of severe affliction, have taught wisdom to old age.

END OF VOL. I.

THE  
TRAGEDIES  
OF  
S O P H O C L E S;  
LITERALLY TRANSLATED  
INTO  
ENGLISH PROSE,  
WITH NOTES.

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TRACHINÆ.

**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.**

**DEIANIRA.  
ATTENDANT.  
HYLLUS.  
CHORUS.  
MESSENGER.  
LICHAS.  
NURSE.  
OLD MAN.  
HERCULES.**



# TRACHINIÆ.

## DEIANIRA.

**T**HERE is an ancient saying, renowned among men, that you cannot fully judge of the life of mortals, whether it has been good or bad to an individual, before his death<sup>a</sup>. But I, even before I come to the realms of Pluto, know that I have led my life in misfortune and calamity: I, who indeed, while dwelling in the palace of my father *Œneus*, in *Pleuron*<sup>b</sup>, felt the greatest horror of nuptials of all the *Ætolian* maids. For my suitor was a river, I mean the *Achelous*, who, in three forms, sought me of my father; now coming in manifest shape, a bull<sup>c</sup>; at another time, a speckled wreathed snake; and at a third, in the body of a man, with the head of a bull; and from his thick-shady beard,

<sup>a</sup> This sentiment is common enough; but the way in which it is here talked of, as famous and proverbial, shows us that *Sophocles* had in view the speech of *Solon* to *Cræsus*. If he meant to make *Deianira* quote *Solon*, he is guilty of a very gross anachronism.

<sup>b</sup> *Pleuron* was the capital of *Ætolia*, and is reported to have been a city of great splendour in the early ages of Greece.

<sup>c</sup> This seems to have been the common way, in ancient times, of representing rivers. *Homer* has frequent allusions to it; and *Horace* applies the epithet “*tauriformis*” to the *Aufidus*, at a time when such superstitions had rather gone by. There are various accounts given of the origin and meaning of this fanciful custom; but that which supposes it to have some reference to the overflowing of the *Nile*, when the sun enters the Bull, though far-fetched, is perhaps the least absurd.

the streams of liquid founts kept flowing. I, wretched, having received such a suitor, always prayed to die before I should ever approach his bed. And in late time indeed, but to my joy, came the illustrious son of Jove, and Alcmena, who, engaging with this monster in the strife of battle, delivers me. The manner of their fray I am not able to describe; for I know it not; but whosoever sat undismayed during the spectacle, he could tell it<sup>d</sup>. For I sat confounded with terror, lest my beauty might, on a time, work my bane. But Jove, the arbiter of conflicts, disposed the issue well, if in truth it be well; for being united his awarded bride to Hercules, I ever sustain fear succeeding fear in boding cares for him, since night brings, and night in turn removes some toil. And I indeed have born him children, whom, like a husbandman that hath a field far distant, he hath once only looked on in the seed-time, and once again in the harvest. Such a life sends from home and to home the hero, always paying service to some one<sup>e</sup>: and now, when he has reached the goal of these labours, here in truth I feel most alarmed. For since the time that he slew the mighty Iphitus<sup>f</sup>, we in-

<sup>d</sup> A spirited description of the combat is given by the Chorus in this play, v. 500—530.

<sup>e</sup> Eurystheus king of Mycenæ was the great task-master of Hercules. The Fates had decreed that the one of them who was first born should have the other for his slave. Juno, the implacable step-mother of Hercules, took advantage of her power as the goddess of child-birth, to give Eurystheus the important start. Virgil alludes to this circumstance, *Æn.* viii. v. 291.

—————ut duros mille labores  
Rege sub Eurystheo, fatis Juuonis iniquæ,  
Pertulerit.

<sup>f</sup> The murder of Iphitus is related in this play, v. 270—275.

deed, changing our abode, dwell here in Trachis, with a hospitable chief<sup>g</sup>; but where he has gone, no one knows: but he has departed, leaving bitter pangs to me on his account; and I am almost sure that he has met with some mishap. For he remains for no small space of time, but already for ten months, in addition to other five, without sending any tidings; and there must be some dreadful misfortune. Of this purport he left me, at his departure, a writing, which I often pray to the gods to have received unaccompanied by calamity.

## ATTENDANT.

My mistress, Deianira, I have already seen you bewailing the departure of Hercules with many weeping laments; and now, if it be right to admonish the free-born with the opinions of a slave, it behoves even me this much to suggest. How, indeed, do you abound with so many children, yet do not send some one in search of your husband, and especially Hyllus, whom it becomes to show if he bears any regard for his father's prosperity? But here he himself, near at hand, is bounding towards the house with vigorous step; so that, if I seem to you to give seasonable advice, it is in your power to avail yourself of the presence of the youth, and of my words.

DIE. O child, O my son, even from the ignobly born noble words proceed: for this woman, indeed, is a slave, but she has spoken no slavish speech.

## HYLLUS.

Of what import?—tell me, mother, if it may be told.

<sup>g</sup> Ceyx the king of Trachis.

DEI. That it brings reproach on you, your father having been so long abroad, not to make inquiry where he is.

HYL. But I know, if at least one may believe reports.

DEI. And where on earth do you hear, my child, that he is situated?

HYL. They say that for the by-past year he has laboured through its long period in bondage to a Lydian woman<sup>h</sup>.

DEI. One may therefore hear every thing if he submitted to this<sup>i</sup>.

HYL. But he is released from this at least, as I learn.

DEI. Where now then, living or dead, is he reported to be?

HYL. They say that he leads, or is still on the point of leading, an expedition against the land of Eubœa and the city of Eurytus.

DEI. Know you then, my son, how he left to me unerring predictions concerning this land?

HYL. Of what kind, mother? for I am ignorant of the tale.

DEI. That he is either about to bring his life to its close, or, having accomplished this labour, for the future to spend the remainder of his days in a tranquil existence. Will you not then, my son, go to aid him,

<sup>h</sup> Omphale.

<sup>i</sup> Quæri potest, cur tantopere Deianira indignetur Omphalæ Herculem servire qui antea per tot annos Eurystheo servilem operam præstiterat. Mihi videntur duæ hujus indignationis causæ fuisse, prima, quod fœminæ, altera vero quod Lydæ, i. e. barbaræ, in servitutem addictus fuerat. Musgrave.

depending on this crisis, since we are either preserved, if he preserve his life, or at the same time depart and fall, if your father perish?

HYL. But I go, oh mother! and, if I had known the annunciation of these oracles, even formerly I would have been present. But now, since I know the intelligence, I will omit no endeavour to learn the whole truth concerning these circumstances. But the usual fortune of my father does not permit us to feel foreboding fear, nor to be deeply dismayed.

DEI. Go now, my son; for even he that is late in doing well, yet, when he learns his duty, procures gain.

#### CHORUS.

Whom spangled night, as she resigns her glories, gives birth to, and again lulls to sleep, the sun<sup>k</sup>, the blazing sun, I implore to tell me of Alcmena's son, where, where at all he dwells, oh thou that beamest with refulgent splendours, whether on some ocean isthmus, or resting on either continent<sup>1</sup>; tell me, oh thou, who in power of vision art unmatched! For I learn that Deianira, who was the object of rivalry, ever with longing thoughts, like some wretched bird, refuses to seal in slumber the regret of her tearful eyes; but cherishing a terror ever present to her mind, on account

<sup>k</sup> Ἄλλὰ σὺ γὰρ δὴ πᾶσαν ἐπὶ χθόνα καὶ κατὰ πόντον  
αἰθέρος ἐκ δίης καταδέρκεαι ἀκτίνεσσι,  
νημερτίως μοι ἐνισπε, φίλον τέκος εἴ που ὄπωπας.

Homer. Hymn. in Cer. v. 69.

<sup>1</sup> It is rather absurd to suppose that Hercules could be on the two continents at the same moment. Musgrave, after reprehending the inaccuracy of the expression, makes a very good-natured excuse for it in these words: "Sed nimis severi sumus, nec tanta loquendi subtilitas a poeta exigenda."

of the journey of her lord, pines away on her widowed couch of care, in expectation of an evil and wretched doom. For as one may behold many billows urged by the blasts of the unwearied north or south advancing, and speeding in succession over the wide ocean,—thus life's many cares nurse the infancy and rear the manhood of the Theban hero, like waves on the Cretan main : but some god ever preserves him in safety from the mansions of Pluto. On account of which reprehending you, I will suggest what is pleasing indeed, but opposite to your thoughts. For I say that you ought not to cast away good hopes, since he that reigns supreme, the son of Saturn, hath not allotted all things to mortals devoid of calamity ; but sorrow and joy return in course to all, like the revolving paths of the Bear. For neither does spangled night remain to mortals, nor the fates, nor wealth ; but in a moment they are gone : and to the same mortal succeed joy and the loss of joy. Wherefore I bid you, my queen, in hope ever to retain these reflections ; since who hath seen Jove thus devoid of care for his children ?

DEI. You are present, having learned, as may be conjectured, my sufferings : but how I pine in spirit, may you never learn by experience. Now you are ignorant of its woe : for youth is pastured in such vales of its own ; and neither does the heat of heaven, nor showers, nor any gale, disturb it ; but it builds up with pleasures a life of ease, until one be called a wife instead of a virgin, and receive her share of anxiety in the hours of night, either fearing for her husband or her children. Then might any woman perceive, considering her own condition, by what evils I am weighed down.

Many sufferings indeed then have I lamented ; but one such as I have never before [lamented,] will I immediately disclose. For when the royal Hercules departed on his last journey from home, then he leaves in the palace an ancient tablet, inscribed with mandates, which before, though going forth to many combats, he never had the heart to disclose to me ; but he went, as about to achieve some feat, and not to fall. But now, as though he were no more, he told me that it was fitting I should take my marriage portion, and told me what share of their paternal property he awarded to be divided to his children ; having appointed, that when he should be gone a year and three months from the country, it was either fated he should die in this time, or, escaping the close of its period, should live for the future in a life free from pain. Such things, he said, were decreed for consummation by the gods concerning the labours of Hercules, as the ancient beech-tree at Dodona had formerly announced by the lips of the twin doves<sup>m</sup>. And the certainty of these predictions coincides with the present time, so that it is necessary they should be accomplished. Thus, my friends, while sweetly slumbering, I start from repose, agitated with terror, lest it be fated that I should remain bereft of the best of all men.

CH. Speak now words of good omen, since I see some messenger advancing, crowned with garlands on account of his tidings.

<sup>m</sup> Those who wish for an account of the oracular doves of Dodona may consult Herodotus, lib. ii. 55. where they will find an explanation scarcely less absurd than the original fable. Eustathius and the Scholiast both offer their conjectures on the point, without considering it at all requisite to be within the verge of probability.

## MESSENGER.

Deianira, my queen, I, first of messengers, will release you from your apprehensions; for, know that the son of Alcmena is living, and is crowned with conquest, and, the battle over, is bringing its first-fruits to the gods of his country.

DEI. What words are these, old man, that you have spoken to me?

MES. That quickly to thy palace shall come thy much-desired lord, returning with his triumphant powers.

DEI. And from what citizen or stranger did you learn the tidings you tell?

MES. The herald Lichas, his attendant, is proclaiming these things in the verdant meadow. Hearing them from him, I rushed away, in order that, having first related them to you, I might gain something at your hands, and acquire favour<sup>n</sup>.

DEI. But how, if well he speed, is he himself absent?

MES. Because, O lady, he encounters some difficulty: for all the Melian people, standing round him in a circle, interrogate him; nor is it in his power to advance farther. Each wishing to learn fully the welcome news, will not let him go till he have heard to his satisfaction. Thus he, unwilling, is present with the willing; but you will soon see him appear.

DEI. O Jove! who presidest over the uncultured<sup>o</sup>

<sup>n</sup> The messenger is at all events abundantly candid in confessing his scurvy motive.

<sup>o</sup> Uncultured in consequence of its being set apart and consecrated to the god. The epithet *ἀρόμων* may also be translated "undevastated,"



mead of Æta, thou hast bestowed on us, though late, the joy. Raise your acclaim, ye maids, both ye within the house, and ye without the court, since we now enjoy the eye of happy rumour beaming unexpectedly upon me.

CH. Burst forth, ye palaces, with the shouts of joy around your hearths! Let the song of the bridegroom, and the mingled notes of the youths ascend! Celebrate, ye virgins, Apollo, our champion, the lord of the graceful quiver; and at the same time Pæan, Pæan; and invoke his sister Diana Ortygia, the huntress of the stag, the goddess wreathed with fire<sup>p</sup>, and her attendant nymphs. I am transported; nor will I disclaim the flute, oh sovereign of my soul! Lo! the thyrsus rouses me up; lo! it inspires me, now hurrying my steps into the rivalry of the Bacchic votaries<sup>q</sup>. Io! Io! Pæan! Behold, behold, dear mistress, you may now see these things clearly before your face.

DEI. I see, dear virgins; nor has the watchfulness of my eyes deceived me so as not to see this band: and I bid the herald hail, though late appearing, if the tidings he brings be of joy.

#### LICHAS.

But well indeed have we come, and well, oh lady,

which bears in a similar way a reference to its sanctity, as being spared, on that account, by the enemy in their hostile incursions.

<sup>p</sup> Diana was represented in the ancient mysteries as bearing a torch in each hand. The epithet *ἀμφίπυρον* is generally supposed to have a reference to these insignia; but it may also be taken as descriptive of the splendour and brightness of the goddess, in her character of Luna.

<sup>q</sup> *Βακχίαν ἄμυλλαν* noto usu accusativi additum est, *convertens me ad æmulandum Bacchas*. Herm.

are we hailed according to the merit of our actions<sup>r</sup>, for it is a matter of course that a man who prospers should gain good words.

DEI. O dearest of men, tell me first, what I most desire, if I shall embrace Hercules alive.

LI. I left him both in strength and life, blooming in health, and not oppressed with disease.

DEI. Where?—in his native or a foreign soil?—speak.

LI. There is a certain promontory of Eubœa, where he is marking out altars, and sacrificing the fruits of his victories to Cenæan<sup>s</sup> Jove.

DEI. In performance of a vow? or on the injunction of some oracle?

LI. A vow,—when he took the country of these women you see before you, the devastated prey of his spear.

DEI. But who, by the gods, are these? and whose are they? for they are the objects of pity, if their misfortunes do not deceive me<sup>t</sup>.

LI. These, when he destroyed the city of Eurytus, he selected, a chosen possession for himself and the gods.

DEI. Was it against this city that he was gone this vast and countless number of days?

LI. No; but for the principal part of the time he was detained in Lydia, as he himself says, not free, but

<sup>r</sup> Verba κατ' ἔργον κτῆσιν ambigua sunt. Nam aut significant κατὰ τὸ ἔργον, ὃ κέκτησθαι, *pro nuncio accepto*, aut κατὰ τὸ ἔργον, ὃ κεκτῆμεθα, quæ est expugnatio Æchaliæ. Herm.

<sup>s</sup> The name is derived from Cenæum, a promontory of Eubœa, which was consecrated to this god.

<sup>t</sup> Dignæ enim sunt miseratione, si de calamitatibus earum recte judico. Schaefer.

sold. But there ought not, oh lady, to be any displeasure at a circumstance of which Jove may appear to have been the cause. For he, as he owns himself, being sold to Omphale, a barbarian, completed a year in her service: and he was thus stung by having this disgrace attached to him, that, laying an oath on himself, he swore that he would yet enslave, along with his wife and children, the man who brought this suffering home to him. Nor did he belie his word; but when he was purified<sup>u</sup>, taking a foreign host, he goes to the city of Eurytus; for he accused him alone of mortals of being the author of this evil; who, when he came a guest to his house, being of old his friend, had much reviled him with words, and the malignity of his mind, saying, that though he bore in his hands the inevitable arrows, he was inferior to his children in the trial of archery: and he says that he, a slave, ought to be treated with blows by a freeman; and when he was heated with wine at the banquet, he drove him out. Being enraged at this treatment, when Iphitus<sup>x</sup> afterwards came to the Tirynthian hill, following the traces of some mares that had left his pastures, then while he had his eye turned in one way, and his mind in another, he hurled him down from the summit of the towering steep<sup>y</sup>. But Jove, the Olympian king, father of all, being enraged on account of this deed, sent him thence

<sup>u</sup> When he had made expiation for the murder of Iphitus, by completing his year of bondage.

<sup>x</sup> One of the four sons of Eurytus.

<sup>y</sup> This was a very blackguard piece of business on the part of Hercules. It argues bad taste in the poet to introduce a story which tends so much to destroy our favourable impressions of his hero.

in slavery, nor brooked that he should slay Iphitus, alone of men, by guile. For had he openly assailed him, Jove would have forgiven him for justly vanquishing his opponent: for the gods do not love injustice. But they who wantonly boasted with reviling tongue, are all the inhabitants of the shades, and their city is captive. But these virgins, whom you behold, having met with an unenviable life, from an high estate, come to you: for thus at least your husband enjoined, and I, being faithful to him, execute his command. And when he shall have offered the holy sacrifices to his father Jove for the capture of the city, expect him to come himself: for this, of all a long tale of happy tidings, is the sweetest word to hear.

CH. Now, O queen, manifest joy accrues to you, both from what is present, and from what you have learnt by this speech.

DEI. And how should I not, when I hear of these prosperous fortunes of my husband, rejoice with all the just joy of my soul? There is strong necessity that my joy should keep pace with his success. Yet still fear dwells in those who consider things aright<sup>z</sup>, lest he, who is in prosperity, should at some moment stumble in his course. For a powerful sentiment of compassion, my friends, has entered my bosom as I look on these ill-starred virgins, wandering in the land of strangers, afar from their homes, and bereft of their fathers, who in former days, perchance, were the offspring of high-

<sup>z</sup> Τοῖσιν ἐν σκοπομένοις recte vertit Brunnkius: "Tamen inest his aliquis metus, si rem rite expendas." Quippe intelligitur prospera Herculis fortuna, neque, ut Hæpferus et Billerbekius sibi persuaserant, ad puellas adstantes pertinet. Erdfurt.

born chiefs, but who now lead the life of slaves. O Jove, averter of my ills, may I never at any time see thee thus advancing against my children, nor, if thou wilt do aught, while I at least am yet alive! Thus am I moved by fear, beholding these captives. O unhappy in thy lot, who of youthful virgins art thou?—unmarried, or a mother? Yet, by your appearance, you are unacquainted with all this, but art one of noble birth. Lichas, of whom of mortals is this stranger the daughter? Who was the mother that bore her? Who was the father that begot her? Declare it. For I, on beholding her, have pitied her the most of these, in as much as she alone knows to feel for her situation<sup>a</sup>.

LI. What do I know? Why should you ask me? Perhaps the offspring of parents who there are not amongst the meanest.

DEI. Is she the daughter of Eurytus the king?

LI. I know not: for I did not make any great inquiries.

DEI. Nor have you learnt her name from some one of the companions of her way?

LI. By no means. I performed my task in silence.

DEI. But do you, unhappy maid, speak to me yourself: since it is a sort of misfortune not to know you, at least who you are.

LI. She will not now utter a word more than formerly, she who has not yet spoken much or little<sup>b</sup>; but,

<sup>a</sup> Quod prudentiæ specimen ediderit Iole, ex contextu non patet; liberaque adeo conjectura lectori relinquitur, utrum lachrymis præsentis mali sensum testata sit, an vultu sereno et placido animi magnitudinem ostenderit. Musgrave.

<sup>b</sup> Expectabat Deianira, responsuram esse Iolen. At illa tacet. Id

ever deploring the weight of her calamity, the wretched maid keeps shedding tears from the time that she left her wind-swept<sup>c</sup> country. This circumstance is unfortunate indeed, for herself at least, but it deserves pardon.

DEI. Let her therefore be indulged, and let her go within thus as is most agreeable to her, nor, in addition to her present evils, let her receive from me at least a double pain: for that which she already feels is enough. And now let us all go home, that you at least may hasten where you please, and I may put things within in proper order.

MES. Here, at any rate, first wait for a little while, in order that you may learn apart from these, whom at least you conduct within; and of what you have heard nothing may be fully made acquainted, too, with all that is proper to know: for I have the full intelligence of these things.

DEI. What is it? Why do you stay my steps?

MES. Standing still, listen: for neither did you formerly<sup>d</sup> hear my words in vain, nor do I think you shall now.

videns Lichas dicit: οὐτ' ἄρα οὐδὲν διοίσει γλῶσσαν ἐξ ἴσου τῷ γε πρόσθεν χρόνῳ: nihil ergo differet ab se ipsa loquendo, (i. e. semper eadem erit, constanter servando silentio,) æque ut antea fecit. Herm.

<sup>c</sup> “Διήνεμον, ventis perflatam, i. e. desertam, ut bene interpretatur Scholiastes.” Musgrave. From this we must venture to dissent. The native city of Iole is mentioned, in another place, as “the lofty” Æchalia, which will sufficiently account for its being exposed to a little rough weather, without having recourse to the “interpretatio” of the Scholiast, or Musgrave, his approving ally.

<sup>d</sup> This messenger is the same officious person who came before to announce the arrival of Lichas.

DEI. Whether, in truth, shall I call those persons back again, or do you wish to speak to these virgins and to me?

MES. To you and these there is no restriction, but suffer the others to remain away.

DEI. And in fact they are gone, and let your news be signified.

MES. This man utters nothing of what he has just spoken according to the strictness of truth: but either now he is false, or formerly was present no true messenger.

DEI. What say you? Clearly deliver to me all that you have in your mind; for, as to what you have spoken, ignorance possesses me.

MES. I heard this man saying, in the presence of many witnesses, that, for the sake of this virgin, Hercules both destroyed Eurytus and the lofty towers of Æchalia; and that Love alone of the gods had moved him to raise his spear in this war; not his adventures in Lydia, nor his service of toil with Omphale, nor the headlong death of Iphitus; [but love] which he now setting aside, contradicts his former statement. But when he did not persuade the father to give up his daughter that he might enjoy her secret embraces, having devised some slight ground of complaint and quarrel, he leads an expedition against the country of this damsel, in which he said that Eurytus was lord of the throne; and he slays the king her father, and has sacked the city. And he comes, O lady, as you see, sending her to this palace, not without design, nor as a slave; expect not this: nor is it likely, since he hath been inflamed with desire. It seemed therefore good

to me, oh queen, to disclose to you every thing which I have chanced to learn from the herald: and many in the middle of the Trachinian forum heard this at the same time equally with myself, so as to bring it home to him. But if I do not say what is agreeable, I am sorry; yet still I have spoken the truth.

DEI. Ah unhappy me! in what circumstances am I placed? What secret bane have I received under my roof? O wretched woman that I am! Is she then of an obscure name, as he that conducted her swore, she so brightly beauteous both in face and form?

MES. Being by birth the daughter of Eurytus, she was formerly called Iole, whose parents he could not tell, having, forsooth, made no inquiry.

CH. Let not all the wicked perish, but him who ever practises base fraud unworthy of his character<sup>e</sup>.

DEI. What, ye women, ought to be done? for I am driven out of my mind by this present intelligence.

CH. Go and interrogate the man, since he will quickly tell the truth, if you appear inclined to question him by force.

DEI. Well, I go: for you do not advise without judgment.

CH. But shall we remain? or what is it proper to do?

DEI. Remain; since this man, not summoned by my messengers, but of his own accord, is passing out of the house.

LI. What is it fitting, O lady, that I, returning,

<sup>e</sup> The Chorus evidently utter this malediction to show their indignation at the duplicity of Lichas, though they justly take the opportunity of having a slap at the master while they abuse the man.



should say to Hercules? Inform me, since, as you see, I am going.

DEI. Do you, thus coming after so long a time, so quickly depart before we renew our conversation?

LI. If you wish to make any inquiry, I am present.

DEI. Do you deal in the honesty of truth?

LI. Great Jove be my witness, in whatever at least I know.

DEI. Who, in truth, is the woman whom you come conducting?

LI. A woman of Eubœa: but from whom she is sprung I cannot tell.

MES. Ho you, look this way: to whom do you think you speak?

LI. And you, for what purpose do you ask me this question?

MES. Dare to answer, if you are wise, what I ask you.

LI. To Deianira the queen, daughter of Æneus, and wife of Hercules, [if my sight deceive me not,] and my mistress.

MES. This was the very thing I sought to learn from you. Do you acknowledge that this is your mistress?

LI. Yes; for she is so with just right.

MES. What then? What punishment do you consider yourself worthy to suffer, if you be found untrue to her?

LI. How untrue? What wiles are you attempting?

MES. None: you however are doing this in a very great degree.

LI. I go ; and I was a fool to listen so long to you.

MES. Not at least before being shortly examined you shall make answer.

LI. Speak, if you wish, any thing ; for you are not much inclined to silence.

MES. Do you know the captive whom you have brought to this palace ?

LI. I answer no. But why do you inquire ?

MES. Did you not say that you were conducting Iole, the daughter of Eurytus, her whom you now look upon as unknown ?

LI. Amongst what sort of men ? who, and whence coming, will bear witness to you that present he heard these words from me ?

MES. Amongst many of the citizens. A great crowd in the middle of the Trachinian forum heard, full sure, these words from your mouth.

LI. Very true ; I said that I heard this at least. But it is not the same thing to state one's notion, and to maintain an assertion as correctly true.

MES. What notion ? Did not you, speaking under an oath, declare that you brought this damsel as a wife for Hercules ?

LI. I talk of a wife ! Tell me, my dear mistress, by the gods, who in the world is this stranger ?

MES. One who present heard you assert, that all the city was subdued through love of this woman, and that the Lydian dame was not the cause of its destruction, but the love of Iole bursting forth<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>f</sup> Musgrave proposes, in place of *φανείς*, to read *σφαλείς*, *frustratus*, which would be a decided improvement, were there any good authority for its adoption.

LI. Let this man, O queen, begone: for to babble with a madman is not the part of the wise.

DEI. Do not, by Jove, who rolls his thunders along the summits of Æta's forests, falsify thy tale; for thou wilt not tell it to a woman of a base spirit, nor one who does not know the disposition of men, that it is not by nature formed to take pleasure always in the same things. Whoever indeed resists love, like a pugilist, hand to hand, is unwise. For Love rules even the gods as he pleases, and my heart at least; and why not another's, such at any rate as mine? So that if I blame my husband, possessed by this disease, or this maiden, the cause of no dishonour nor evil to me, I am mad in the extreme. It is not so. But, if learning it from him, you feign this tale, you learn no good instruction; and if you thus teach yourself, when you wish to be good, you shall be proved to be bad. But speak the whole truth: since for a freeman to be called a liar is a disgraceful stain attaching to his character. Nor is it possible that you should escape detection; for there are many to whom you have spoken who will repeat your words to me. And if you fear indeed, your fears are foolish; since not to know it might give me pain; but as to knowing it, where is the harm? Has not Hercules, one husband, already married several other wives<sup>§</sup>? and no one of them has yet heard from me, at least, evil word or reproach; nor shall she, even though he be deeply imbued with her love, since I pitied her most of all when I looked on her, because her beauty has been the ruin of her life, and she, in

§ Such were Megara, Auge, and Astydameia; not to mention the fifty virgins, whom, to crown his labours, he took to wife in one night.

her unhappy fate, has unwillingly brought to destruction and slavery her native land. But let these things speed on with propitious gales; and I desire you to be deceitful to others, but never to be guilty of falsehood to me.

CH. Obey this dame, recommending what is good; and you shall afterwards not blame your compliance, and shall acquire my gratitude.

LI. But, O my dear mistress, since I perceive you, a mortal, have thoughts becoming a mortal, and are not void of judgment, I will tell you the whole truth, nor conceal aught. For the fact is so as he asserts. A vehement passion for this damsel once on a time thrilled through Hercules, and on her account was her native Æchalia, in wide destruction, laid low by the spear. And these circumstances, for it is proper to tell that which is for his part, he neither bade me keep close, nor ever denied; but I myself, O queen, fearing lest I should pain your breast by these tidings, was guilty of this error, if in aught you deem it an error. And now, since you know all the story, both for his sake and your own equally, bear this woman with patience, and resolve to confirm the words which you have spoken concerning her. For he who bore the palm in every thing else by his valour, is no match at all for his love of this maid.

DEI. But, thus both my sentiments incline so as to do these things, and I will not bring on myself a voluntary malady, maintaining an unequal contest with the gods. But let us go within the palace, that you may both hear the answers which I charge you to bear, and take the gifts which it behoves us to prepare, in suit.

able return to his gifts: for it were not right that you, who came with such a great train, should return empty-handed.

## CHORUS.

Venus ever triumphs in a certain mighty power of victory; and the loves of the gods indeed I omit; nor do I sing how she beguiled the son of Saturn; nor Pluto, the king of night; nor Neptune, the shaker of the earth. But to gain Deianira as a bride, certain suitors, of giant limbs, entered the lists before the nuptials<sup>h</sup>, and went through the strife of a battle, resounding with blows and enveloped in dust. The one indeed was the potent river, in the quadruped form of a bull, with towering horns<sup>i</sup>, Acheloüs from the Cœniadæ; and the other came from Bacchic Thebes, lightly wielding his unbent bow, and shafts, and club, the son of Jove; who then, burning for her embrace, rushed to the struggle. And the beauteous Venus<sup>k</sup>, alone present in the midst, presides o'er the fray. Then was there the din of blows, and of the bow, and the mingling crash of the horns of the bull; then were there the

<sup>h</sup> “Πρὸ γάμων. Frigidissimum foret ante nuptias, nec πρὸ pro περὶ accipi sinit aut versus superior, aut Græcorum usus.” Musgrave. “Πρὸ γάμων est pro potiundis nuptiis.” Erdfür.

<sup>i</sup> The appearance of Acheloüs with horns looks as if he had been already married, instead of merely coming to woo. Perhaps the god of the river designed it as a practical pleasantry on the fate he anticipated in case of his proving the successful suitor.

<sup>k</sup> “Non intelligendum de Dea Paphia, quæ neque εὐλεκτρος dici solet, neque coram certamini interfuisse a mythologis traditur. Est igitur Κύπρις nihil aliud quam εὐνή, connubium sive conjux. Totum locum sic interpreto: sola autem puella formosa in medio assidens certamini præerat: i. e. nullius βραβευροῦ jussu, sed puellæ duntaxat amore incitati, in arenam descendebant.” Musgrave.

locked interwinings of wrestling, and the deadly blows of the forehead, and groans<sup>1</sup> from both. And the soft and beauteous nymph sat on a conspicuous mound, awaiting him who should be her spouse; [with all a mother's feelings I tell the tale<sup>m</sup>;] and her eye that fired the contest, sorrowfully expected its issue; and away from her mother she straightway departed, like some young deserted heifer.

DEL. Whilst, my friends, the stranger is conversing with the captive virgins, as about to depart, I have, in the mean time, privily come without the gates to you, partly to explain to you what I have devised with my hands, and partly to bewail, along with you, the sufferings I endure. For I am of opinion that I have received this captive, no longer a maiden, but a wife, as a mariner his freight, so I this merchandise to the ruin of my peace: and now we two, beneath one coverlet, await his embrace. Such a reward has Hercules, that was called my faithful and good husband, sent me in return for the care with which I watched over his house for so long a time. But I indeed do not know how to be angry with him, so oft afflicted with this disease: and yet again to dwell in the house along with her, and share the same marriage, what woman could endure<sup>n</sup>? For I see her youth indeed advancing to

<sup>1</sup> “*Σρόνος*. Cicero hanc vocem in Quæst. Tusc. II. 23. illustrat: pugiles vero, ait, quum feriunt adversarium, in jactandis cæstibus *ingemiscunt*, non quod doleant animove succumbant, sed quod profundenda voce omne corpus intenditur venitque plaga vehementior. Idem faciunt *athletæ*.” Billerbeck.

<sup>m</sup> Or, “I tell the tale as her mother told it to me.”

<sup>n</sup> O quam cruentus feminas stimulat dolor,  
Cum patuit una pellici et nuptæ domus.

ripeness, and mine decaying; from the former of which the eye is wont to cull flowers, but from the latter to turn away the steps. This therefore I dread, lest Hercules should be called indeed my husband, but be the husband of the younger wife. But enough; for it is not proper, as I said, for a woman possessed of prudence to give way to anger; but in what way I gain a release from my troubles, that I will explain to you. I had a gift once on a time of old bestowed by an ancient Centaur, concealed in a brazen urn; which, while yet a girl, I took from the death-wound of the shaggy-bosomed Nessus, who, for hire, bore mortals in his arms over the deep flow of the river Evenus, neither plying with the speeding oar, nor with the sails of a bark. He, bearing me also on his shoulders, when first unattended by my father's train I followed Hercules, as he reached the middle of the stream, touched me with lewd hands; but I screamed out; and the son of Jove immediately turning, sent from his hands a winged arrow; and through his chest, even into the lungs, it whizzed. And these were the words that the dying Centaur spoke: "Daughter of aged Ceneus, such profit shall you derive, if you obey me, from this passage, because you are the last I bear across the river: for if you take with your hands the curdled gore from my wound, where the monstrous Hydra of Lerna has steeped the arrow with its black venom, this will prove to you a soothing charm over the mind of Hercules, so that he shall not, looking on any woman, feel more affection for her than for you." Revolving, my friends, this counsel in my mind, (for in the house, after his death, it remained carefully shut up,) I have steeped

this garment, applying whatever he, while alive, commanded; and the task is completed. But may I neither know nor learn the deeds of evil daring; and those women who attempt them, I hate: yet if we can any how get the better of this damsel by philtres and soothing charms essayed on Hercules, this plan has been well contrived, unless I appear to you to make a vain attempt; but if I do, it shall be desisted from.

CH. But if there be any faith in the trial, you seem to us not to have determined amiss.

DEI. Thus at least my faith rests, so that it is accompanied, indeed, by my opinion of success; but I have never yet made acquaintance with the experiment.

CH. But it is necessary to obtain the knowledge by doing the action; since, though you seem to have, you cannot have, the knowledge, without making the trial.

DEI. But we shall soon know: for I see the herald already without the gates; and he will quickly go. Only let our secret be faithfully preserved by you; for if you do what is base in the dark, you shall never fall into shame.

LI. What is to be done? tell me, O daughter of CENEUS, since we are already tardy by long delay.

DEI. But I am equally impatient as you, (the while you are talking to these strangers within,) that you bear for me this well-woven robe, a gift to that hero from my hand. And, presenting it, direct him that no one of mortals before him put it on his person, nor that ray of the sun behold it, nor sacred shrine, nor flame from the hearth, before that, standing conspicuous, he display it bright to the gods, on some day



marked by the sacrifice of bulls. For thus I vowed, if I ever should see him safe at home, or hear of his return, that with full ritual observance I would deck him in this vest, and exhibit him to the gods, a new sacrificer in a new garment. And of this you shall hear to him a token, which he will easily recognise, when he casts his eye on this seal. But go; and first observe this rule, not to desire, being a messenger, to do more than you are required; and in the next place, act so that his favour towards you, uniting with mine, instead of single, may become double.

LI. But, if I faithfully exercise this art of Hermes, I will not be guilty of any failure in your trust, so as not bearing this vessel, to show it him in its present state, and to add faithfully the words which you have spoken.

DEI. You may now, if you choose, depart: for you also know of the affairs in the house, in what state they are.

LI. I both know, and I will report, that they are well.

DEI. And you know too, having seen my reception of the stranger, that I welcomed her in a friendly manner.

LI. So that my heart was amazed with joy.

DEI. What else indeed should you relate? for I fear lest you first tell my longing desire for him, before you know if the affection be mutual.

#### CHORUS.

O ye who dwell by the warm baths bordering on the station of the ships and rocks of the sea; and ye by the

cliffs of Æta, and the middle of the Melian lake, and the shore of the virgin with golden shaft, where the Pylian assemblies of the Greeks convene, the flute, with its beauteous notes, ere long returns to you, breathing forth no unpleasing melody, but such as may challenge the lyre of the divine muse. For the son of Jove and Alcmena, bearing the spoils of every virtue, hies him home; whom, absent from his country and afar over the sea, we waited for, all ignorant of his fate, through the full space of twelve long months. And his beloved spouse in misery, in saddest misery at heart, ever drenched with tears, kept pining away:—but now hath Mars, being maddened by desire, brought to a close our day of sorrow. Let him come! let him come! let not the bark that bears him on with many an oar stop in its course, before that he effect his way to this city, having left the altar of the island where he is said to be sacrificing; whence let him hasten through the whole day, being wrapt in the robe deeply imbued with persuasion, according as the Centaur directed.

DEI. How I fear, O virgins, lest all that I have just done, be done by me beyond what is right.

CH. O Deianira, daughter of Æneus, what has happened?

DEI. I know not: but I fear lest I shall quickly appear to have wrought a great evil from the persuasion of good hope.

CH. Surely it cannot be any thing about your gifts to Hercules?

DEI. Yes, most particularly; so that I would never advise any one to act with promptness in an uncertain event.

CH. Tell us, if it may be told, from what circumstance your fears arise.

DEI. A circumstance has occurred, of such a nature as I shall describe; an unexpected marvel, ye damsels, for you to hear. For that, with which I was just anointing the tunic<sup>o</sup>, the white wool from the snowy fleece of the sheep, that has disappeared, consumed by none of the domestics, but corroded by itself, it wastes away, and smoulders down the surface of the slab<sup>p</sup>. But that you may know the whole way in which this was done, I shall extend my narration to greater length. For of those charges with which the wild Centaur, while anguished by the bitter barb in his side, had tutored me, I let slip not one, but preserved them like an indelible writing on a brazen tablet. And thus it was commanded me, and I obeyed it, that I should preserve this drug unexposed to the fire, and untouched by the warm sunbeam in those close recesses, until I should somewhere apply it in fresh unction. And this I did: and now, when the operation was to be tried, I secretly, within the walls of the house, spread it on the garment with a lock of wool, having drawn it from the fleece of a domesticated sheep; and folding up the gift, I placed it, as you saw, in a hollow chest secure from the beams of the sun. But, going within, I see a sight that cannot be described, and impossible for mortal to conceive. For I chanced to throw the wool torn from the sheep, with which I was smearing the robe, into

<sup>o</sup> “Ἐνδυστήρα πέπλον, i. e. χιτῶνα, tunicam, vestem interiorem. Hæ enim ἐνεδύοντο, superiores (χλαῖναι sc. χλαμύδες, et hujusmodi aliæ) περιεβάλλοντο.” Musgrave.

<sup>p</sup> Or, “smooth stone,” where she had laid out the wool to dry.

the blaze of mid-day, the rays of the sun; and as it became warm, it all melts into nothing, and fritters away on the ground, chiefly resembling, in appearance, the dust from the saw, should you chance to see it, in the cutting of wood. In this way it lay fallen; and from the ground where it was spread out, there boil up gouts of foam, like as when the rich juice of mellow autumn is poured on the earth from the vine of Bacchus. So that I, wretched, do not know to what thoughts to turn: and I see that I have wrought a dreadful deed. For whence at all, and in return for what, should the dying Centaur do an act of kindness to me, for whom he perished? It cannot be so: but wishing to destroy him whose shaft pierced him, he beguiled me; of which I acquire the knowledge too late, when it is no longer of avail. For I alone, if I am not deceived in my mind, I, wretched woman, shall be the cause of his death. For I know that the arrow that gave the wound was fatal even to the divine Chiron<sup>q</sup>, and destroys every living thing it touches: and how shall not the black venom of the gore, issuing from the wound of the Centaur, slay also Hercules? In my opinion, too sure it will. And yet I am determined, if he fall, that at the same moment I too shall die along with him: for to live with the stain of infamy is not to be endured by me, who preferred to every thing else a nature abhorrent of baseness.

CH. It follows, of course, that there should be horror at dreadful deeds; but it is not right to condemn our hopes before the event.

<sup>q</sup> This story is to be found at length in Ovid's *Fasti*, Book V. 379.

DEI. In dishonourable designs there is no hope which may conciliate any confidence.

CH. But for those who fall into involuntary error, there is a softening of anger, which it is fitting you should meet.

DEI. Such comfort may he suggest, who does not share in the evil, but to whom there is at home no grief<sup>r</sup>.

CH. It were as well for you to suppress in silence the rest of your words, except you are going to disclose something to your son; for he is present who formerly went away in search of his father.

HYL.<sup>s</sup> O mother! how of three things I would choose one, either that you were dead, or that if you lived you were called the mother of some other son, or from some whence might acquire better feelings than those you now possess.

DEI. What deed of mine, my son, excites this abhorrence?

HYL. Know that you have this day slain your husband, and my father.

DEI. Woe is me! what tale, my son, do you bear?

HYL. The tale of that which it is impossible can be undone; for who is able to uncreate that which has once been born?

DEI. What say you, my son? From what mortal having gained this information, do you assert that I have done such a hateful deed?

<sup>r</sup> "Facile omnes, cum valemus, recta consilia ægrotis damus :

Tu, si hic sis, aliter sentias."

TERENT. ANDR. II. i. 9.

<sup>s</sup> Hyllus has been away at Cenæum, and back again, during an hour's conversation between his mother and the Chorus. This is a violation of the unity of time with a vengeance.

HYL. I myself witnessed, with my eyes, the grievous sufferings of my father, and I did not hear it by report.

DEI. And where did you meet with him, and were present by his side?

HYL. If it is requisite you should know, it behoves me to tell you all. When he departed<sup>t</sup>, after having destroyed the renowned city of Eurytus, bearing with him the trophies and first fruits of victory; there is a certain sea-washed shore of Eubœa, called the Cenæan promontory, where he consecrates to his father Jove altars and the foliage of a sacred grove: there I, with longing joy, first beheld him. And when he was about to offer up the sacrifice of many victims, there came a herald from home, his servant Lichas, bearing your gift, the deadly garment, which he putting on as you directed, slays twelve bulls, of perfect shape, the first fruits of his spoils; but he brought altogether to the altar a mingled herd of an hundred cattle. And at first indeed the wretched man, rejoicing in his robe and ornaments, addressed his vows with a cheerful mind: but when the bloody flame blazed forth from the sacred offerings and oily wood, sweat burst out on his skin, and the tunic clung to his body, closely glued, as if by some artificer's hand, to every limb; and convulsive wrenching of the bones succeeded. Then, as the envenomed gore of the accursed Hydra revelled in his veins, he called on the unfortunate Lichas, him who had no share in your guilt, by what treachery he had brought the garment: and he, ill-starred wretch, all-ignorant, said it was the gift of you alone, as it had been sent. And Hercules, as

<sup>t</sup> Recte hic ὁδ' pro ὄρε, non pro ὅθι, accipitur: *quum profectus est expugnata Echalia, Cenæum est, ubi sacra fecit: pro his: quum profectus est, sacra fecit in Cenæo.* Hermann.

he heard these words, and the agonizing pangs assailed his lungs, seizing him by the foot, where the ankle bends, dashes him on a rock, washed all around by the sea; and the white brains gush out from the middle of the head, the blood being scattered around, and the hair along with it. And all the people shouted aloud with lamentation, the hero being afflicted with this pest, and the herald being slain; but no one dared to approach Hercules. For he was racked by the pain, both lying on the ground and standing up, shouting and shrieking: and the rocks around resounded, the mountain headlands of the Locrians, and the promontories of Eubœa. But when he grew faint, oft dashing himself, the wretched man, on the ground, and howling with loud clamour, reviling the evil nuptials of your unhappy couch, and the alliance of CENEUS, how he had contracted it to the ruin of his life, then raising his distorted eyes from the mist settling over them, he saw me shedding tears amidst the numerous crowd, and looking on me, he calls me: "O my son, come hither, do not shun my miseries, not even though it be necessary for you to die along with me, your dying father: but bear me away, and by all means, if possible, place me there, where no one of mortals shall behold me; and if you feel pity, transport me, at least, from this land" with all speed, nor let me die here." When he had urged this request, we placed him in the middle of a ship, and brought him, bellowing

<sup>u</sup> "Maxime omnium cupiebat Hercules, ut solus, nemine mortalium præsente, mortem obiret: proximum ab eo erat, ut ex Eubœa saltem ante mortem aveheretur, ne Æchaliensibus gaudii materiem præberet, ut bene judicat Scholiastes. Hoc igitur impensius quam alterum rogat: *At si misericordia tangeris, saltem tu me ex hac regione deportari cura.*" Musgrave.

in agony, with difficulty to these shores; and you shall presently see him, either alive or newly dead. In such devices and deeds against my father, O mother, have you been detected, for which may penal justice and the avenging fury repay you: this, if it be lawful at least, I imprecate: but it is lawful, since you towards me have cast away all law, having slain a hero the noblest of all on earth, such another as you shall never behold.

CH. Why do you depart in silence? Do you not know that by preserving silence you confirm the charge of your accuser?

HYL. Suffer her to go; may there be a fair wind to her departing to a distance from my sight. For why is it necessary to cherish the empty sound of a mother's name, since she in nothing acts like a mother? But let her go where she chooses; and the delight that she has afforded my father, that same may she herself enjoy.

#### CHORUS.

Behold, ye virgins, how quickly hath advanced to its completion, the heaven-sent decree of ancient oracular prescience, which announced, that when the twelfth year should arrive at its close, in the fulness of months, there should ensue a respite from his toils to Jove's genuine son; and, without swerving, it is speeding on this doom in its course. For how can he who beholds not the light, endure the servitude of toil, at least any longer in death? For if resistless jealousy, working by guile, envenom him with the bloody cloud of the Centaur; in his side the poison rankling, which death and



the spotted serpent gave birth to; how shall he behold another day than the present, being racked by the horrible spectre of the Hydra? and, at the same time, the deadly pangs, produced by the guileful words of the dark and shaggy Nessus, torture him with their burning throbs. Wherefore she, a wretched woman, seeing the great and sudden bane of new nuptials hastening to the house, did not perceive that the counsel proceeded from a deceitful purpose, for a reconcilment in death. Sure, somewhere in misery, she is groaning; sure, somewhere she is shedding the fresh dew of fast-falling tears. But his approaching death points the way to a secret and deep calamity\*. The fount of tears hath burst forth. The disease envelopes him: oh, ye gods, such a piteous suffering as never befell the illustrious Hercules from his enemies. Oh, woe for the black point of his champion spear, which then didst bring his new-won bride from lofty *Æchalia*! But *Venus*, executing her ministry in silence, hath clearly appeared the cause of all.

SEMICHO. Whether am I deceived, or do I hear some lamentation newly bursting forth in the house? What shall I say?

SEMICHO. Some one utters within no doubtful wail, but one of deep sorrow; and something new happens to the house.

SEMICHO. But do you perceive the old woman, how, in an unusual way, and with contracted brow, she comes to us, about to signify some intelligence?

\* Implying, that in case of the death of Hercules, *Deianira* would not survive him.

## NURSE.

O virgins, how has that gift which was sent to Hercules been the beginning to us of no small evils!

CH. What new event, old woman, do you tell?

NUR. Deianira has gone the last way of all, without moving the foot.

CH. Surely not as dead?

NUR. You have heard all.

CH. Is the wretched woman dead?

NUR. You hear it a second time.

CH. Wretched, ruined woman! in what way do you say that she died?

NUR. In a most miserable way, as regards at least the deed.

CH. Tell, oh woman, what death she met.

NUR. She destroyed herself.

CH. What rage or what madness urged her?

NUR. The point of a cruel weapon despatched her.

CH. How did she contrive alone to effect death in addition to death?

NUR. By the wound of the mournful steel.

CH. Did you look, oh wretched woman, on this outrage?

NUR. I looked on, as being in truth near her side.

CH. What was it? how?—quick declare.

NUR. She herself by her own hand does the deed.

CH. What do you say?

NUR. That which is certain.

CH. This new bride has produced a mighty fury to this house.

NUR. Too sure, indeed; but still more, if, present and near, you had beheld what she did, would you have deeply pitied her.

CH. And did any woman's hand dare to do these deeds?

NUR. Yes—and terribly: but you shall learn the circumstances, so as to agree with me. When she entered by herself within the palace, and saw her son in the court, spreading garments over the hollow litter, in order that he might return to meet his father, concealing herself where none should see her, she shrieked out, as she fell before the altars, that she had become desolate, and wept when she touched any of the instruments which, wretched woman! she was wont to use: and roaming here and there through the palace, if she chanced to see the person of some loved domestic, the unhappy woman wept at the sight, herself arraigning her own fortune, and her sterile existence for the future. But when she desisted from these complaints, I see her suddenly rushing to the chamber of Hercules; and, concealed in the shade, I watched her with secret eye; and I behold her casting the outspread garments on the couch of Hercules. But when she had finished this task, leaping up, she sate down in the middle of the bed, and giving vent to the warm fountains of tears, spoke: “O bed, and scene of my nuptial joys, for the future now farewell, since you shall never again receive me to repose on this couch.” Having spoken these words, she unfastens with quick hand her robe, where the clasp, wrought in gold, shone in front of the breast, and she laid bare all her side and her left shoulder. And I, running as fast as I was able, tell to her son

the deeds she devised : and whilst we hasten thither and hither, we see her wounded in the side, beneath the liver and the heart, by the double-edged sword. But her son, when he beheld her, shrieked ; for the wretched youth perceived that she had put her hand to this deed in anger, being too late informed of what had taken place at home,—how she unwillingly had done this at the instigation of the Centaur. Hereupon, her unhappy son wailing for her, neither omitted aught of lamentation, nor ceased to bestow kisses on her lips, but stretching himself out by her side, he lay deeply mourning that he had rashly wounded her with a cruel accusation,—and weeping, because that he should be at once deprived of two, his father and his mother. Such is the state of circumstances here : so that if any one count on two days or more, he is a fool ; for there is not at least a to-morrow before he pass without misfortune the present day.

## CHORUS.

Over which shall I first raise my lamentation ? It is difficult for me, a wretched being, to decide which has been consummated in most utter ruin. The one, indeed, we at present behold in the palace, and the other we are on the eve of expectation of beholding : and it is the same thing to have and to be about to have. Oh that some gale of wind, blowing in favourable direction from the hearth of the house, would bear me away from this spot, that I may not die in dismay as soon as I once behold the valiant son of Jove ; since in incurable pain, they say he is advancing to the palace, an object of marvellous horror. In near, therefore, and no dis-

tant anticipation, have I mourned like the nightingale of plaintive note; for here comes the attendant procession of strangers. Where are they bearing him? As if taking care of a friend, each lifts his slow and noiseless steps. Alas! alas! alas! he, speechless, is borne along. Whether must we deem him dead or asleep?

HYL. Woe is me for thee, oh father! woe is me unhappy for thee? What shall I do? What counsel shall I take? Woe is me!

#### OLD MAN.

Peace, my son; do not awaken the fell pangs of your maddened father; [for though thus sunk down, he lives;] but compress with your teeth your lips.

HYL. How say you, old man?—does he live?

O. M. Beware, my son, lest you awake him, now enthralled by sleep, and rouse him up, and again kindle the fury of his dire disease.

HYL. But my mind has become frenzied to a degree intolerable to me a wretched mortal.

#### HERCULES.

O Jove! to what region have I come? Amongst what mortals do I lie tortured by these never-ceasing pains? Woe is me, for my misery! The accursed pest again devours me! Alas!

O. M. Do you not perceive how much better it would have been to bury your words in silence, and not dispel sleep from his temples and eyelids?

HYL. But I am not able to be silent, beholding this calamity.

HER. O sacred altars, founded on Cenæum, what a return for what splendid sacrifices have ye made to me, a wretched man! O Jove, what a disgrace thou hast brought on me!—a disgrace such as I would that I, in my misery, had never beheld with my eyes,—this unappeasable fury of madness they must look on! What enchanter is there, or what skilful possessor of the healing art, who, without the aid of Jove, shall lull to peace this pest? Oh that, though far off, I might behold this miracle! Alas! alas! suffer me, suffer me; an unhappy mortal, to repose in quiet. Where do you touch me? Where do you lay me? You will kill me! you will kill me! You have awakened the pangs that slumbered. That touch has pained me: my disease again comes on. Where are ye, oh ye most unjust men of all the Greeks; for whom I oft, destroying monsters in the sea and in all the forests, exposed my life?—and now against me, in this malady, no one will turn either fire or a friendly sword! alas! alas! nor hastening, is willing to cut off my head, and end my wretched life! Alas! alas!

O. M. O son of the hero! this task has become too great for my strength: but do you assist, for you have a clearer eye than me to discern what will aid him.

HYL. I indeed lend my hand: but it is impossible for me, either from my own, or from foreign resources, to allay the tortures of his life. Jove alone possesses the remedy.

HER. O my son! my son! where at all are you? Here, here, taking hold of me, raise me up. Alas! alas! oh my sad fortune! It bursts on me again, it bursts on me, the wretched ruin of my life, the imme-

dicable fell disease. O Pallas, again it tortures me. Take compassion, O my son, on your father, and, drawing an innocent sword, strike me beneath the throat. O heal the agonies with which your impious mother has maddened me; whom may I behold perishing thus, even thus as she has destroyed me. O brother of Jove, dear Pluto, lull me, O lull me to sleep, ending, by a speedy fate, my wretched existence.

CH. I have shuddered, my friends, hearing by what sufferings our king, mighty as he is, is persecuted.

HER. Oh, I that have toiled with my hands and with my shoulders in many a daring and unutterable deed; and never yet has the spouse of Jove presented to me such an evil, nor Eurystheus, my hated enemy, as this net, woven by the furies, by which I die, which the treacherous daughter of Æneus has affixed to my shoulders. For, glued to my sides, it has gnawed away my outward flesh, and clinging within it drains the arteries of my lungs; and it has already drank up my discoloured blood, and I am consumed through my whole frame, bound in these inexplicable fetters. This, neither the martial array on the plains, nor the earth-born host of the giants, nor the might of monsters, nor Greek, nor barbarian, nor all the countries which, clearing from their pests, I penetrated, ever effected: but a woman, being of a feminine, not a masculine nature, by herself, and without the aid of the sword, has destroyed me. O my son, prove that you have been born my genuine son, and do not pay too much reverence to the name of a mother: taking your mother by force from the house, give her into my hands, that I may clearly know whether you will more pity her fate than

mine, when you see her mangled body punished with justice. Come, my son, dare this deed, and pity me, the object of pity to many, who, like a girl, have howled and wept: and this no mortal can say that he ever saw me do before; but without a groan I met my misfortunes. Now, in place of such a stern character, I am found to be a weak woman. Approaching now, stand near your father, and see by the operation of what a calamity I endure these sufferings: for I will show them uncovered. Lo! here behold ye all this wretched body; look on me, an ill-fated mortal, in what a pitiable condition I am! Ah! ah! woe is me! alas! alas! The convulsion of my agony is again burning; again it thrills through my sides, nor do the gnawings of the wretched disease appear likely to leave me at rest. O king Pluto, receive me! O lightning of Jove, strike me! Brandish, O monarch of the sky; hurl, O father, the bolt of thy thunder! For it revels on me again; it has burst out, it has rushed forth upon me. O shoulders and breast! O my dear arms! are ye the same that once slew by your might the lion that dwelt in Nemea, scourge of the shepherds, a huge and terrific monster; and the Hydra of Lerna; and the unapproachable host of Centaurs, partaking of two natures, insolent, lawless, and surpassing in might; and the Erymanthian boar; and below the earth, the triple-headed dog of Orcus, a monster unvanquished in fight, offspring of the horrid Echidna; and the dragon that guarded the golden apples in the world's remotest regions? And a thousand other toils I essayed, and no one ever erected a trophy in triumph over my might. But now, thus disjointed and torn to pieces, I, wretched, am the prey of



this blind pestilence ; I, who was said to have sprung from a mother the noblest of all ; I, who was pronounced in heaven the son of Jove. But be well assured of this at least, that even though I am nothing, and unable to move, I shall even from such feeble strength punish her who did this deed. Would that she might only come, that by what she experienced, she might be able to announce to all, that both in my life and death, I took vengeance on the wicked.

CH. O wretched Greece ! what a sorrow I foresee will be yours, if at least you be deprived of this hero.

HYL. Since, father, you give me leave to reply to you, although in pain, listen to me in silence ; for I shall ask of you what it is right to obtain. Give yourself up to me, but not with feelings smarting under the vehemence of anger ; for you cannot thus be able to perceive how in some things you vainly desire to feel pleasure, and how in others you are as vainly pained.

HER. Speak what you wish, and have done ; since I, in my malady, understand none of those things which you already have been refining on.

HYL. I come to tell of my mother, in what circumstances she now is placed, and in what she sinned against her will.

HER. O, basest wretch ! have you made mention of the mother that slew your father, in the expectation that I should listen ?

HYL. For the case is such that it is not proper for me to be silent.

HER. No, in truth, not that the guilt was first committed by her.

HYL. But you will not say so of the things she has this day done.

HER. Speak : but beware, lest you appear to have been born of a base spirit.

HYL. I speak : she has just died by recent slaughter.

HER. By whose hand ? thou hast falsely announced this portent.

HYL. By her own, no stranger's hand.

HER. Alas ! before, as was fitting, she perished by my hand.

HYL. Even your wrath would be turned away if you knew the whole.

HER. You have begun a dreadful tale ; but declare why you thus think.

HYL. She erred in the whole business, desiring what is good.

HER. Did she do what is good, O wretch, in murdering your father ?

HYL. For, thinking to apply a love charm to you, when she saw the new marriage within, she failed in her purpose.

HER. Who, of the Trachinians, is so skilled in charms ?

HYL. Nessus, the Centaur of old, persuaded her to inflame your desire by this philtre.

HER. Woe, woe is me unhappy ! I, wretched, am gone. I am destroyed, I am destroyed ; there exists no longer to me the light of day. Woe is me ! I perceive to what point of calamity I am reduced. Go, my son ; for to you there is no longer a father ; summon to me all the offspring of your brothers, and summon the wretched Alcmena, in vain the spouse of

Jove, that ye may hear, from my lips, the final prediction of oracles, as far as I know.

HYL. But your mother is not here: for she is gone to Tiryns, by the sea-shore, to fix her dwelling there; and of your children, taking some with her, she herself rears them, and others of them, you are to be informed, are dwelling in the city of Thebe. But we, O father, as many as are present, if it be necessary to do any thing, when we hear it, will render the service.

HER. Do you then hear what is to be done; and you have arrived at that point where you shall shew, being what sort of man, you are called my son. For it was predicted to me of old, by my father, that I should not die by any living enemy, but by one who, departed from life, had his dwelling in the shades. This savage Centaur, therefore, according to the divine annunciation, though in death, destroys my life. And I will shew you new oracles, harmonizing with those of ancient date, and having a corresponding issue; which, entering the grove of the Selli, whose home is the mountain, and whose couch the ground, I wrote down as they were delivered from the vocal oak, inspired by my father. Its voice announced to me, that at this time now actually present, there should be consummated to me a release from the toils imposed on me; and I deemed that I should live in prosperity: but this signified nothing else but that I should die. For to the dead no toil arises. Since then, my son, the issue of these prophecies is clear; it behoves you again to prove an ally to me, and not to wait for my mouth to urge you, but yielding, of your own accord, to assist

me, having discovered the best of laws, obedience to a father.

HYL. I am alarmed, O my father, at hearing an address of such a nature; but I will obey you in what seems good to you.

HER. First give me your right hand.

HYL. For what pledge do you make this eager request?

HER. Will you not quickly extend your hand, and not prove disobedient to me?

HYL. Lo, I extend it, and no objection shall be made by me.

HER. Swear now by the head of Jove, my father.

HYL. That I will do what?—and this oath shall be pronounced.

HER. That you will perform the deed enjoined by me.

HYL. I swear; calling Jove to witness.

HER. If you transgress your oath, pray that you may receive punishment.

HYL. I shall not receive it; for I will do what you command; yet still I imprecate the curse.

HER. Knowest thou, then, the highest cliff of Æta, sacred to Jove?

HYL. I know it, having often, as a sacrificer, at least, stood on its summit.

HER. Thither it is now fitting that you bear my body, with your own hands, and with the aid of such friends as you choose; and having cut down many a bough of the deep-rooted oak, and many a trunk of the male wild olive, cast my body on the pile; and having taken the blazing pitchy torch, set it on fire. But let neither groan nor tear have vent; but without

lamentation or weeping, if you are the son of this man, fulfil your task. But if you do not, I await you, and even though I be below the earth, you shall ever be loaded with my curses.

HYL. Oh me! my father, what words hast thou uttered? to what deeds dost thou compel me?

HER. What must be done: if not, be the son of some other, nor be called my son any longer.

HYL. Woe is me! still more again. To what a deed, oh father, do you excite me, to become your murderer and executioner?

HER. No, in truth, I do not; but to be the healer, and only physician, of the evils I suffer.

HYL. But how shall I heal your body by consuming it in the flames?

HER. If you shrink from this, perform at least the rest.

HYL. There shall be no unwillingness at least to bear you.

HER. Will you also pile up, in sufficient quantity, the pyre I have described?

HYL. In so far at least as I am able, so that I do not touch the fire with my own hand. But I will do the other things, and my part shall not be behind.

HER. Well, this will do. But, in addition to these great requests, grant me a small favour.

HYL. Even though it be very great, it shall be rendered.

HER. Knowest thou, in sooth, the daughter of Eurytus?

HYL. You mean Iole, if I conjecture aright.

HER. You are right. This charge, my son, I lay on you: if you wish, in remembrance of the oaths pledged

to your father, to act the part of a pious son after my death, take Iole to your wife, nor be disobedient to my commands. Let no other man but you obtain possession of her who once lay by my side: but do you yourself, my son, make the alliance of these nuptials. Obey me; for having been obedient to me in great matters, to disobey me in small does away with the former favour.

HYL. Ah me! it is wrong to give way to anger against one in this distress; but yet who could endure to see him have sentiments like these?

HER. Do you murmur, as about to refuse to do any of the things I request?

HYL. But who would ever, since she alone was the cause of my mother's death, and to you also of the state to which you are reduced; who, I say, that is not persecuted to madness by the furies, would choose her for a wife? It is better for me, oh father, to die than to dwell with those who are most hateful to my soul.

HER. It seems that this man is not going to pay duty to me in death; but the curses of heaven await you, if you prove disobedient to my commands.

HYL. Alas! you will soon, methinks, perceive how you are affected by disease.

HER. For you again rouse me from the evils which slumbered.

HYL. Wretched man that I am! how I am, in many points, at a loss!

HER. For you disdain to obey a father.

HYL. But shall I teach myself, O father, to act an impious part?

HER. There is no impiety, if you give pleasure to my heart.

HYL. Do you command me then justly to perform these things?

HER. I do: I call the gods to witness.

HYL. I will therefore obey, and no longer refuse, having made it manifest to the gods that this is your deed. For I shall never appear base, O father, acting at least in obedience to your commands.

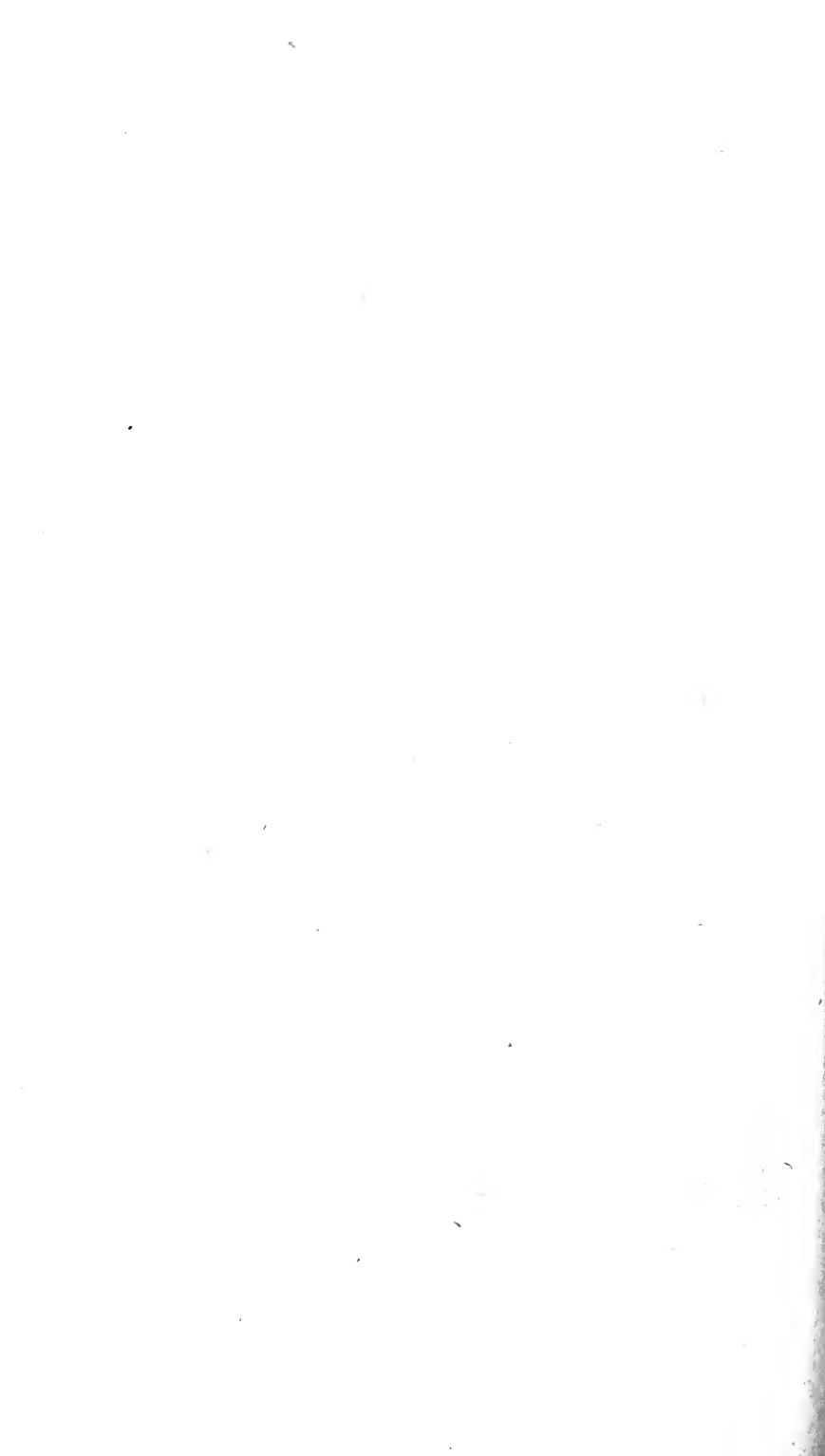
HER. You conclude well; and, in addition to this, make, O my son, your favour speedy, so that, before any torture or pang assail me, you may place me on the pyre. Come, exert yourselves, raise me up: my respite from evils is the final close of my life.

HYL. But there is no obstacle to you in the accomplishment of this, since, father, you command and compel me.

HER. Come now, my stern spirit, before this disease be awakened, fasten on with adamant the bit of steel, and restrain lamentation, since this deed, though altogether involuntary, is accompanied with joy.

HYL. Raise him up, ye attendants, forgiving me for these deeds, and being sensible of the great injustice of the gods, who, though they gave him being, and are called his fathers, can endure to look on these sufferings. The future, indeed, no one foresees; but the events now present are lamentable to us, and disgraceful to them, and most severe to him, of all men, who endures their visitation.

CH. Do ye neither, O virgins, remain at home, having seen these recent deaths of the mighty, and these many sufferings of unwonted affliction; and nought is there of these which the hand of Jove hath not wrought.





A J A X.

VOL. II.

E

**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.**

**MINERVA.**

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**CHORUS OF SALAMINIANS.**

**TECMESSA.**

**MESSENGER.**

**TEUCER.**

**MENELAUS.**

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## A J A X.

### MINERVA.

**EVER**, son of Laërtes, have I observed thee hunting after some attempt on thy foes, to snatch at it<sup>a</sup>, and now I see thee at the marine pavilion of Ajax, where he holds his post the last<sup>b</sup>, long since following him as thy prey, and measuring his freshly graven foot-prints, that thou mayest discover whether he be, or be not within. Well does thy track, of scent sagacious as the Spartan brach's<sup>c</sup>, lead thee forth, for the man chances just now

<sup>a</sup> *Ἀρπάσαι*. This expression is considered by Musgrave as synonymous with the *ὑφαρπάσαι* and *ξυναρπάσαι* of Aristophanes, Nub. V. v. 490, 773. Lobeck, however, quotes Plutarch in support of his opinion, that it bears here the same meaning with the “*auras captare*” of the Latins.

<sup>b</sup> E'en Ajax and Achilles heard the sound,

Whose ships, remote, the guarded navy bound.

Pope's Iliad, B. XI. v. 11.

See also Eurip. Iph. Aul. 292.

The lonely situation of Ajax on the beach, chosen by him when he was *ἡνωρέῃ πίσυννος καὶ κάρτεϊ χειρῶν*, is beautifully alluded to here, where it forms so appropriate a stage for the exhibition of his unfriended solitude and desolation of heart.

<sup>c</sup> The dogs of Sparta are noticed by Virgil for their swiftness, G. iii. 405; which quality Shakespeare has remarked in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*,

to be within, his head and murderous hands dripping with sweat. And there is no need for thee any longer to peer within this his gate, but to declare for what cause thou hast bestowed this anxious toil, that thou mayest learn of me that know<sup>d</sup>.

ULYSSES.

O voice of Minerva, my best-beloved of deities, how surely do I hear, and grasp with my mind, even though thou be unseen, thy well-known accents, like those of the brazen-throated Tuscan trump<sup>e</sup>! And now thou art rightly advised, that I walk my round [a spy] on mine enemy, Ajax the shielded, since him, and none other, I all this while am tracking. For on this very night hath he worked us a wrong unlooked for<sup>f</sup>, if indeed 'tis he hath done this<sup>g</sup>: for we know nothing certain, but are at fault; and I a volunteer have yoked

and elsewhere speaks of them in a passage perhaps yet more applicable to Ulysses:—

—— O Spartan dog,  
More fell than hunger, anguish, or the sea!  
Look on the tragic loading of this bed:  
This is thy work.

Othello, *Act 5, scene the last.*

<sup>d</sup> This may be rendered, “that what I know, and thou wouldst learn, thou mayest.”

<sup>e</sup> Κώδων, strictly speaking, is the bell or broad part of the trumpet. That called the Tuscan, (by Athenæus, κεκλάσμενον,) from its many windings, produced a louder tone.

<sup>f</sup> As in the monstrous grasp of their conception  
Defy all codes to image or to name them.

Doge of Venice.

<sup>g</sup> Εἰργασται, in Sophocles, is always used actively. *Ced. Tyr. 279. Ant. 747.*

me to this trouble. We found but now our captive herds all destroyed, and butchered out of hand, they, and the guardians of the flocks themselves: so each one lays the charge at Ajax' door. And to me a watchman, that espied him bounding over the plains alone, with freshly-reeking sword, is his accuser, and hath made it known; so forthwith I hurry close on his steps, and of part I have proof, but in part I am thrown out, and cannot learn whose they are<sup>h</sup>. But in season art thou come; for in all things, both past (thou knowest) and to come, am I piloted by thy hand.

MIN. I know it, Ulysses; and long since came I forth upon thy path, a zealous guardian to thee in thy hunt.

UL. And do I, dear mistress, toil to purpose?

MIN. Thou dost; these deeds are his, be sure.

UL. And to what inconceivable purpose hath he thus in fury set his hand<sup>i</sup>?

MIN. O'ercharged with indignation about Achilles' arms.

UL. Why then hurries he this inroad on the flocks?

MIN. Fancying that in you he stains his hand with murder.

UL. What! was this plot of his devised as against the Argives?

MIN. Aye, and he had accomplished it, had I been careless.

<sup>h</sup> "Οrov, εἰσι subaud. See Antigone, v. 318. Ajax, 103.

<sup>i</sup> This use of the verb αἰσσω is objected to by Ruhnkenius, who has altered it in two places of Euripides, where it occurs in an active sense. Lobeck, however, defends it by a similar idiom in the words πᾶλλειν, δινεῖν, θοάζειν, etc.

UL. With what circumstance of daring, and rashness of soul?

MIN. At night, alone, he traitorously sallies forth against you.

UL. How! was he close upon us, and reached he the goal?

MIN. Yes, he was even at the gates of the two generals.

UL. And how checked he his hand, ravenous of murder?

MIN. I bar him of his cureless joy, having cast before his eyes intolerable fancies<sup>k</sup>, and turn him aside on the flocks, and mingled multitude of prey, the herdsmen's yet unparted care. There, falling on, he began to mow down the horned host in slaughter, hacking and hewing all around him, and deemed at one time he held and slew with his own hand the two Atridæ, and then, one here, another there, of the chieftains, assaulting them: while I was urging on, and entrammeling in evil snares, the man, frenzied with mad distemperature. And afterwards again, when he rested from this butchery<sup>l</sup>, having bound together with chains those of the oxen that survived, and all the flocks, he conveys them to his dwelling, as having men and not a horned spoil, and is now scourging them fettered at home. Nay, I will also shew thee this his

<sup>k</sup> Γνώμαι sunt hoc loco ludibria oculorum, specie terribilia, ad deflectendum ab proposito itinere Ajacem. Lobeck. Who also, on the authority of Suidas, objects to Musgrave's proposed reading, γλήμας.

<sup>l</sup> Lobeck reads πόνου, and observes that the expression, as it stands in Brunck, is never used but as applied to those "qui a cæde et certamine diuturno quietem habent."

sickness most manifest, that having witnessed thou mayest noise it abroad to all the Greeks. But tarry with firmness, nor look for harm from the man<sup>m</sup>; for I will obstruct the averted glances of his eyes from looking on thy presence<sup>n</sup>. Ho! thou. Thee, that art fitting in chastisement thy captives' hands with bonds, I bid come to me. Ajax, I say, come out before thine abode.

UL. What doest thou, Minerva? by no means call him out.

MIN. Wilt thou not keep silence, nor cherish cowardice?

UL. Nay, by heaven, content thee that he stay within.

MIN. Lest what should happen? Was not this man ere now<sup>o</sup> . . . . .

UL. Mine enemy, I grant, and even now [he is.]

MIN. And is not that the most grateful laugh which we indulge on our foes?

UL. For my part, I am satisfied that he stay within doors.

MIN. Dreadest thou to look on a man most evidently frantic<sup>p</sup>?

<sup>m</sup> Literally, "nor receive the man as a calamity." Hermann very positively asserts that *μίμνε* cannot be taken with *τὸν ἄνδρα*.

<sup>n</sup> This is supposed by Lobeck to have been all copied by Sophocles from the Iliad of Lesches, a Lesbian poet, whose work is mentioned by Pausanias.

<sup>o</sup> Musgrave considers *ἀνὴρ*, as used in this passage, *κατ' ἐξόχην*. Lobeck, with more reason, understands it, "Was he more than man before now?"

<sup>p</sup> Ulysses is here somewhat lowered in the eyes of the audience; but this is in accordance with the spirit which made the sons in the group of

UL. I ne'er had avoided him, through dread, while in his senses<sup>q</sup>.

MIN. Nor fear that he shall now behold thee, though close by him.

UL. How not, if, at least, he looks with the same eyes?

MIN. I will darken his eyes, although they see.

UL. Any thing may be, when a god is the framer.

MIN. Stand now, in silence, and continue as thou art.

UL. I will continue, but I had rather have been elsewhere.

MIN. Ho! ho! Ajax! A second time I call thee to me. Why hast thou so little respect for thine ally?

AJAX.

Minerva, hail, O hail, thou child of Jove. How fortunate thy presence here! I will crown thee, too, with trophies all-golden, in requital of this my spoil.

MIN. Well hast thou said; but tell me this, hast thou well bathed thy sword in Argos' host?

AJ. 'Tis mine to boast, and I will not deny [and say] I did not the deed<sup>r</sup>.

MIN. And hast thou armed thine hand against the Atridæ?

Laocoon disproportionately small to increase the effect of the principal figure. What are we to imagine that madness, which could render the assured protection of a mighty goddess insufficient to encourage a warrior to look on it?

<sup>q</sup> Ulysses speaks the sense of Aristotle here, who in his seventh book observes, that though a bad man be far worse than a wild beast, the latter is more terrible, being irrational.

<sup>r</sup> This form is constantly used by Thucydides: see L. I. c. 73.



AJ. Aye, so as that they shall never more dishonour Ajax.

MIN. The men are dead, as I understand thy speech.

AJ. As dead, now let them rob me of my arms.

MIN. Good. And what then of Laertes' son? How stands he to thee in fortune? has he escaped thee?

AJ. Question you me of that scurvy dog fox, where he is<sup>s</sup>?

MIN. I do: Ulysses, thy rival, I mean.

AJ. My chiefest joy, O queen, he sits a prisoner within. For I would in no wise have him die yet.

MIN. Ere thou shalt do what, or reap what further gain?

AJ. Ere, bound to the column of my hall's dome<sup>t</sup>,—

MIN. What ill, I pray, wilt thou work the miserable man?

AJ. His back first purpled with the scourge<sup>u</sup>, he shall die.

MIN. Nay, do not thus, at least, torture the wretch.

AJ. Minerva, in the rest I concede to thy pleasure, but he shall pay this very penalty and no other.

<sup>t</sup> This was a common custom; and is described by Homer in the *Odyssey*, B. 22. as the punishment of Melanthius, who fares much the same with sir Topaz, in Parnell's *Fairy Tale*.

For a description of the chieftains' tents at Troy, see the last book of the *Iliad*.

<sup>u</sup> Although Minerva was hostile to Ajax, yet to have revenged herself by these means would have been undignified, she therefore tells us that it was to save the Greek army she deluded his eyes with these phantoms. Thus, by her natural interference, the two great enemies are brought on the stage together, Ajax not recognizing his foe, and our pity for Ajax raised to its highest by the contrast. Hermann.

<sup>v</sup> Hence the title of this tragedy.

MIN. Do thou then, since this it is thy pleasure to do, use thine hand, spare to do nought of that thou purposest.

AJ. I go to my work; but this I charge thee with, that thou be ever on my side an assistant such as now.

MIN. Thou seest, Ulysses, the might of gods, how great it is. Whom found you ever, either more provident to counsel, or more brave to act in time of need than this man?

UL. I know of none; and though he be mine enemy, I yet compassionate him, thus wretched, for that he hath been yoked to grapple with a dreadful calamity<sup>\*</sup>, considering no more his fortune than mine own; for I see that all we who are alive, are nothing else but phantoms or unreal shadows.

MIN. <sup>y</sup> Since then thou seest it is so, look that thyself never utter a prideful word against the gods, nor assume aught of vanity, if thou outweighest any one, either in valour or depth of plenteous wealth; since a day sinks and restores again [to light] all human things. But the modest the gods love, and abhor the wicked.

#### CHORUS.

Son of Telamon, that swayest the foundation of sea-girt Salamis, that neighbours the mainland, over thee

<sup>\*</sup> This is precisely Aristotle's idea: "For it evidently is necessary that a person likely to feel pity should be actually such as to deem that either in his own person, or of some one connected with him, he may suffer some evil." *Rhet. B. II. c. 8.*

<sup>y</sup> For similar sentiments, compare the second strophe of the fourth chorus in *Œdipus Tyrannus*.

when fortunate<sup>2</sup> I joy: but when a stroke from Jupiter, or malignant rumour of muttered calumny from the Greeks assails, I feel deep horror, and quiver with alarm, like the glance of a fluttering dove. Even as on the night that now hath waned, great clamours, tending to infamy, beset us; that thou, having rushed forth to the meadow, the courser's joy<sup>a</sup>, hast destroyed the herds and plunder of the Greeks, all that yet was left their lances' prize, slaughtering them with flashing steel. Such whispered words as these Ulysses forging<sup>b</sup> carries to the ear of all, and firmly convinces them; since now he tells a tale of thee, most plausible, and every one that hears is yet more delighted than the teller, at insolently triumphing in thy sorrows. For whoso launches his bolt at noble persons<sup>c</sup>, could not miss: but were any one to bring such charge against me, he would not be believed; since envy crawls on towards the master. And yet the mean, without the great, are but a slippery defence to a tower; for the low united to the great, and the great by means of his infe-

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "doing well."

<sup>a</sup> Hermann translates *ἵππομανῆ*, *equis luxurians*, i. e. *abundans*.

<sup>b</sup> Virgil has not forgotten this characteristic of Ulysses. See the *Æneid*, B. II. v. 97. 164.

<sup>c</sup> Omne animi vitium tanto conspectius in se  
Crimen habet, quanto major, qui peccat, habetur.

See also Aristotle's *Rhet.* B. II. c. 10.

If I am traduced by tongues, which neither know  
My faculties nor person, yet will be  
The chronicles of my doing,—let me say,  
'Tis but the fate of place.

Henry VIII. Act 1. sc. 2.

riors, might best be supported. But 'tis impossible to foreteach the senseless opinions on this. By such men art thou clamoured against, and we have not strength to make head against all this, O prince, without thy aid. No, for when now they have escaped thine eye, they clatter like flocks of birds; but shrinking in terror from the mighty vulture, voiceless, perhaps they would all on a sudden cower in silence, wert thou to appear. Full surely did the bull-hunting Diana<sup>d</sup>, daughter of Jove, [oh wide report! oh mother of my shame!] incite thee against the public droves of oxen; either haply in requital of some victory to her fruitless, or cheated of her present of illustrious spoils, or vow for the stricken deer. Or it might be Enyalios, of the brazen breastplate, having some complaint in behalf of his aiding spear<sup>e</sup>, that by nightly devices avenged for himself the wrong. For, surely, thou couldst never, son of Telamon, intentionally have essayed [a purpose] so sinister, assaulting the flocks: yet a disease from heaven might visit thee: but may Jove and Apollo avert the evil slander of the Greeks. If, however, the mighty princes are by stealth suborning these fables<sup>f</sup>, or any of

<sup>d</sup> Thus Lobeck gives it. Brunck translates it, "*tauris vecta*." Musgrave's idea would make Sophocles guilty of an anachronism. "Concursusque matronarum in templum Dianæ, quam Tauropolon vocant, ad spem exposcendum fieret." Liv. XLIV. c. 44.

<sup>e</sup> Musgrave translates this, "*ullus est contumeliam hastæ auxiliatrici suæ illatam*." Hermann, reading *εἰ τὴν* observes, that as Mars was a friend to the opposite party, this expression is well adapted to a person very much in doubt if the spear of Mars could ever have consorted with that of Ajax.

<sup>f</sup> The Scholia mention that Anticlea, mother of Ulysses, was violated by Sisyphus, on her way to her betrothed husband, Laertes; and add, that it was with the connivance of her father Autolycus, who had been detected in stealing some property from Sisyphus.

Sisyphus' abandoned<sup>g</sup> race, do not, do not, my king, any longer thus, keeping thine eye fixed within thy tent on the shore, receive the ill report. But rise from the seat, where long since thou art rooted in the slow torture of this protracted inaction, inflaming thine heaven-sent plague: while the insolence of thine enemies thus fearless is speeding amid the breezy glens; and all from laughing tongues are launching the grievous burden, [of their scoffs,] but on me sorrow hath settled.

## TECMESSA.

Defenders of the ship of Ajax, of lineage from the earth-born Erectheidæ<sup>h</sup>, we have cause to mourn with groans, who from afar are well-wishers to the house of Telamon. For now Ajax of savage strength, the terrible, the mighty, is lying diseased with tempestuous fury.

CH. How has this night changed the burden of the daytime? Child of Telleutas the Phrygian, speak,

<sup>g</sup> For the use and abuse of the word *ἄσωτος*, see Aristotle's *Eth.* B. 4.

<sup>h</sup> A political stroke to please the Athenians, derived probably from the tradition of the *Æacidæ* passing over to Salamis from *Ægina*, which belonged to Attica. Aristotle. *Rhet.* 1. 15. alludes to a dispute between Athens and Megara respecting their title to Salamis, which the Athenians proved by citing these verses from Homer's Catalogue:

*Αἴας δ' ἐκ Σαλαμῖνος ἄγεν δυοκαῖδεκα νῆας,  
Στῆσε δ' ἄγων, ἔν' Ἀθηναίων ἴσταντο φάλαγγες.*

Which second line Quintilian asserts not to have been found in every edition, and Laertius (in Solone) mentions a report of Solon's having interpolated Homer in this place. It is certain, however, that when Clisthenes the Alcmaeonid changed the names of the Athenian tribes into appellations derived from indigenous heroes, Ajax alone of foreign extraction was admitted to this honour, and the tribe *Aiantis* was called after him. Herod. 5. 67.

since the ardent Ajax, dearly loving thee, honours thy captive bed<sup>i</sup>, and thus thou wouldst not ignorantly hint at aught.

TEC. How, then, shall I speak a tale unspeakable? for thou wilt hear a calamity terrible as death, since our illustrious Ajax, seized with phrenzy, hath this night been degraded. Such butchery, weltering in gore, the slaughter of his hand, mayest thou see within, the victims of that man.

CH. What tidings hast thou disclosed, insupportable, yet unavoidable, of the fiery warrior!—tidings whispered among the Greek chieftains already, and which wide report exaggerates! Ah me, I fear the approaching ill<sup>k</sup>. Too plainly will the hero fall by his phrenzy-stricken hand, having slaughtered with dark sword at once the cattle and the herdsmen<sup>l</sup>.

TEC. Ah me! 'twas thence, then, thence he came, bringing us the fettered flock; of which some he was butchering on the ground within, and others he was rending asunder, hewing open their sides. But having chosen out two white-footed rams, he lops off and throws away the head and tip of the tongue of one<sup>m</sup>,

<sup>i</sup> Movit Ajacem Telamone natum  
Forma captivæ dominum Tecmessæ.

Hor. Lib. II. Od. iv. l. 5.

<sup>k</sup> "Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat." Musgrave thinks the word *περίφαντος* should be translated, "*undecunque manifestus, multis indicibus convictus.*"

<sup>l</sup> According to Musgrave, the Greek here alludes to some spot in the plain of Troy called Hippius. Hermann reads *ἱππονώμους*.

<sup>m</sup> The conduct of Fulvia, wife of Antony, exhibits a similar instance of revenge, when with a bodkin she pierced the tongue of the murdered Cicero.

and having tied the other upright to a pillar, and taken the large curb-rein of his chariot, he lashes it with a whistling double scourge, reviling it in shameful terms, which a dæmon, and none of men, had taught him.

CH. Time is it now for one, having shrouded one's head in a veil, to adopt a stealthy flight on foot, or seating him on the speeding bench of [our] oarage, commit himself to the ocean-bounding bark<sup>n</sup>. Such threats do the Atridæ of twin sway in concert ply against us. I fear lest, stricken, I share the pain of a violent death by stoning with Ajax<sup>o</sup>, whom an unapproachable calamity possesses.

TEC. No longer. For having rushed forth as the impetuous south wind without the flashing lightning<sup>p</sup>, he is calm. And now, being sensible, he feels a fresh sorrow. For to look on sufferings all one's own, none other faring alike, suggests deep pangs.

CH. Yet if he be at rest, I deem myself most fortunate, for of the evil now vanished there is less thought.

TEC. Whether now, did any one assign you the choice, would you choose, afflicting your friends, your-

<sup>n</sup> "Dixere volebat εἰρεσίαν ναὶ μεθεῖναι, solvere, i. e. liberum facere remorum usum. Sed quoniam addere volebat ἐζόμενον, conjunxit hæc ita, ut diceret θοδὺν εἰρεσίας ζυγὸν ἐζόμενον. Tantumdem est ergo, ac si dixisset ἐν τῷ θοῷ ζυγῷ ἐζόμενον, εἰρεσίαν μεθεῖναι τῇ νηϊ." Herm.

<sup>o</sup> The Greek has λιθόλευστον ἄρη. Probably death in war, being the most noble, (Ar. Eth. Nic. 3.) is put for its whole class, just as the Hoplites of a Greek army stood for the whole infantry.

<sup>p</sup> "In summer, when there are thunders and lightnings, thenceforth arise violent winds: and if the lightning be frequent and vivid, they blow with greater fury; but if it be slight and seldom, then they are gentler: the contrary of which is the case in autumn and winter." Theophrast. de Sign. Vent. p. 421. The same fact is said to take place in the West Indies.

self to be possessed of pleasures, or a sharer amid sharers, to sympathize in pain?

CH. The misery doubled, believe me, lady, is the greater.

TEC. Thus we, though not diseased, are now afflicted.

CH. How hast thou said this? I know not how thou meanest.

TEC. That man, while he was diseased, was himself delighted with the woes in which he was involved, but by his presence tortured us who were in our senses. But now that he has ceased, and respired from his malady, both he is all racked with dreadful anguish, and we similarly no less than before. And are not these, then, double ills from single?

CH. I agree with you, and am in fear lest some plague from heaven be upon him. How should it not, if when at rest he is not a whit more gladdened than when distempered?

TEC. It needs thou be assured that these things are so.

CH. Well, and what might be the beginning of this evil that assailed him? Disclose to us, who sympathize in his misfortunes.

TEC. Thou shalt know the whole matter, as being a sharer in it. For he, in the dead of night, when the evening lamps were no longer burning<sup>a</sup>, having taken

<sup>a</sup> This has by some been understood to mean the stars; but from the common mode of designating the approach and close of the night by similar expressions (*περὶ λύχνων ἀφάς*. Di. Hal. xi. *μέχρι λύχνων ἀφῶν*. Athen. xii. *ad extremas lucernas*. Propert. L. 3. El. 8.) the translation as it stands appears most probable. It may be questioned, however, whether *ἄκρας νυκτός*



his two-edged sword, was eagerly seeking to prowl through the deserted passes. So I chide him, and say, "What dost thou, Ajax? Why unbidden, nor summoned by messengers, hurriest thou to this attempt,—nor hearing any trumpet? Now at least the whole army is asleep." He answered me with words brief, yet ever the burthen of man's song. "Woman, to women silence brings honour<sup>r</sup>." And I, thus schooled, desisted, while he rushed forth alone. And of his sufferings without I cannot speak; but he came in, bringing with him bulls tied together, herdsmen's dogs, and a noble horned booty. And of some he began to break the necks; others, turning them on their backs, to stab and cut through their spine; while others, enchained, would he scourge, falling on the flocks as on men. But at last, bursting away through the doors, he began to rant out words to some shadow<sup>s</sup>, part against the Atri-dæ, and part about Ulysses; blending with them abund-

means the dead of night, or its close. Pindar (Isthm. 4.) asserts that it was in the night that Ajax fell on his sword.

<sup>r</sup> "This is from Callistratus: 'As leaves are an ornament to trees, their fleeces to sheep, their manes to horses, the beard to men, so silence is an ornament to women.'" Potter (*from the Scholia*.) A similar sentiment is put in the mouth of Hector, Il. vi. v. 490. See also Euripides:

Γυναικὶ γὰρ σιγὴ τε καὶ τὸ σωφρονεῖν  
Κάλλιστον.

<sup>s</sup> Thus Aristophanes:

πινακηδὸν ἀποσπῶν  
γηγενεῖ φύσῃματι.

Ranæ, v. 825.

And Virgil:

— imoque trahens a pectore vocem.

Æn. 1. v. 375.

ance of laughter, with how much of insult he had avenged himself on them in this sally. And then, having hurried back to his abode again, hardly is he at length restored to his senses, I know not how. And when he looks throughout the house, full fraught with [the work of] destruction, he smote his head, and shrieked aloud; and amid the wrecks of the carcasses of slaughtered sheep, he sat stretched on the ground, rending with clenched grasp of hand and nail his hair. This time had he sat the longest without speaking: then in dreadful terms he threatened me, unless I shewed him the whole calamity that had befallen; and asked me in what case he could possibly be. So I, my friends, being afraid, told him all that had been perpetrated, exactly as much as I knew. But he forthwith broke out into doleful shrieks, which never before had I heard from him; for such laments he all along was wont to pronounce were suited to a man of cowardly and little-minded spirit. But he, noiseless of shrill outcries, would groan inwardly, moaning as a bull. And now lying in such miserable plight, the man, uncheered by food or drink, has fallen, and sits quietly amid the cattle, victims of his steel: and he evidently is about to work some ill, such are, I know not how, his words and lamentations. But, oh my friends, for to this intent was I sent, come ye in, and aid him, if at all ye can. For such as he are vanquished by the advice of friends.

CH. Tecmessa, daughter of Teleutas, dire is thy tale to us, that the hero has by his woes been driven to utter madness<sup>t</sup>.

<sup>t</sup> A metaphor from the inspiration supposed to be derived from the sun.

AJ. Ah me, me!

TEC. Soon, it seems, will he be more so. Hush! heard ye not Ajax, what a cry this is that he utters aloud?

AJ. Alas! alas!

CH. He is, it seems, either still distempered, or at present pained with the sickness that erst possessed him.

AJ. Oh son! son!

TEC. Unhappy me! Eurysaces<sup>u</sup>, for thee he clamours. What can he be thus eager for? Where art thou? Woe is me!

AJ. Teucer I call: where's Teucer? will he everlastingly be following the foray<sup>x</sup>, while I am perishing?

CH. The man, it seems, is sensible: but open. Haply he may feel somewhat of respect, at looking even on me.

TEC. Behold, I open<sup>y</sup>; and thou mayest see his deeds, and how he himself is conditioned.

AJ. O mariners beloved, my only friends, who only are abiding by [friendship's] just law, see what a tide from a bloody and tempestuous ocean, just now careering round, encircles me.

<sup>u</sup> Eurysaces was son of Ajax by Tecmessa, so named from the celebrated shield which in this play his sire bequeaths him.

<sup>x</sup> This confirms the remark of Thucydides respecting the nature of the Greek expedition against Troy, and the causes of its so long duration. Thuc. I.

<sup>y</sup> Here takes place the *ἐκρύκλημα*, as it was called in the Greek theatres; the centre of the scene opens, and discovers Ajax sitting among the slaughtered cattle.

CH. Alas! how just, too just, appears thy testimony! The deed declares how insane he is.

AJ. O race, that helped me in the seaman's art, thou that didst embark to ply the briny oar,—thee only, thee, I say, of all my guardians, have I seen bent to relieve me. No more; but slay me too.

CH. Be thy words of good import: do not, by ministering to ills a remedy as ill, augment the pain of thy calamity.

AJ. Seest thou me, the bold, the stout-hearted, the fearless in conflict with the foe,—now terrible of might amid harmless brutes? Woe is me for the derision [to come!] How must I have been insulted!

TEC. Do not, lord Ajax, I implore thee, speak thus.

AJ. Wilt thou not away? wilt not move hence thy foot in quick retire? Alas! oh alas!

CH. Oh, by the gods I pray thee, yield, and be of thy right mind.

AJ. O luckless wretch, that let slip from my hands the villains; and falling on beeves with crinkled horns, and on bleating flocks, shed their black blood!

CH. Why, in sooth, shouldst thou grieve over the past and done? for it is impossible that these things should not be so.

AJ. O thou that pryest into every thing<sup>z</sup>,—conti-

<sup>z</sup> The description of Ulysses here given much resembles Thersites' picture of himself in *Troilus and Cressida*: "No, no, I am a rascal, a scurvy railing knave, a very filthy rogue." And the mercy which he thereupon obtains from Hector, may well bear Philoctetes out in his sentiments on the good and bad among mankind. See *Phil.* 446. Hermann, in opposition to Musgrave, considers this a reproach levelled by Ajax at the disguise assumed by Ulysses to penetrate Troy: see *Od.* 4. 244.

nually the tool of all mischief,—son of Laertes,—thou vagabond,—the worst, the filthiest of our host, full surely thou exultest with many a laugh for joy.

CH. By heaven's boon every one both laughs and mourns.

AJ. Could I now but see him, though afflicted as I am! Alas! alas!

CH. Speak nothing haughty: seest thou not in what misery thou art?

AJ. O Jove, sire of my forefathers, how might I, having destroyed that most smooth-tongued juggler, that hated outcast, and the two sovereign princes, at last myself too fall?

TEC. When such is thy prayer, at the same time beg death for me also; since what need have I to live, when thou art no more?

AJ. O darkness, now my light, O Erebus, to mine eyes most radiant, take me, oh take me, as your inmate take: for no longer am I worthy to look on the race of gods or mortals for any profit to mankind<sup>a</sup>. No, the warrior goddess, daughter of Jove, disgracefully persecutes me to destruction. Whither, then, can one fly? Whither shall I go, and there abide? since one part is gone, my friends, e'en with the work before you; and I have set myself to hunt a silly prey: but

<sup>a</sup> There's nothing in this world can make me joy:

Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale

Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man;

And bitter shame hath spoil'd the world's sweet taste,

That it yields nought but shame and bitterness.

King John, Act 3. sc. 4.

for the army—they all would slay me with hand doubly armed<sup>b</sup>.

TEC. Ah hapless me! that a man of worth approved should utter words like these, which he ne'er before could have had the heart [to speak!]

AJ. Rivers, that murmuring roll into ocean,—caverns, that skirt the main,—and thou, cliff-crowning grove, much time, much and long time have ye detained me around Troy; but no more, no more shall ye [keep] me drawing the breath of life: know this, whoever is possessed of reason. Oh neighbouring streams of Scamander, kindly of spirit to the Greeks<sup>c</sup>, think not ye shall any longer look on me, a man (I will speak out the haughty boast) such as Troy hath not seen in all the host who came from the land of Greece. And now, thus dishonoured, am I lying prostrate.

CH. Believe me, I know not how either to prevent thee or suffer thee to speak, all fallen as thou art into miseries such as these.

AJ. Ah! ah! Who could have ever thought that my name<sup>d</sup>, thus accordant, would harmonize with my

<sup>b</sup> *δίπαλτος* here, as *δορίπαλτος* in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, is used transitively. Eustathius on this passage says the *παλτόν* was a particular weapon.

<sup>c</sup> Lobeck understands this passage as a mark of Ajax' deep resentment and passion, in thinking the very streams of Troy had conspired against him with his present enemies, the Greeks. There does not, however, seem any reason why we should adopt this certainly far-fetched idea, unless it be the rise of the Scamander to overwhelm Achilles, as told in the Iliad. Musgrave, on this account, proposes to read *δυσφρονες*. Hermann removes the comma after *Ἀργείοις*, and renders the passage "never again will ye in your favour to the Argive host look upon this man," *vestro favor victorem*.

<sup>d</sup> The ancients attributed much importance to the signification of names;

misfortunes! For now twice, nay, thrice, have I cause to utter <sup>αἶψα</sup> Ah! in such evils am I involved; I, whose father from this land of Ida, having best deserved of all the army the choicest prize of honour, returned home possessed of perfect renown; while I, his son, having come to this very realm of Troy, with might not inferior, [to his,] nor having achieved in aid [of Greece] actions less glorious with my hand, perish thus unhonoured by the Greeks. And yet of thus much at least methinks I am assured, that were Achilles, yet alive, purposing to award the prize of excellence to some one in the matter of his own arms, none else but I had grasped them. But now, on the contrary, the Atridæ have worked his will for a crafty villain, having rejected the might of Ajax. And had not this mine eye and distorted mind wildly strayed from my purpose, never again should they by vote have given judgment against man<sup>e</sup>. But now the dauntless goddess, daughter of Jove, stern of aspect, baffled me, already putting forth my hand upon them, having cast on me a distempered frenzy, that I stained my hands with blood on brutes like these, while they are deriding me, having escaped,

and their idea was probably founded on tradition, derived from the patriarchal ages, as they also held the inspiration of a death bed, taken from the same source. "God shall enlarge Japhet," and Japhet signifies enlargement. Abram and Sarai changed their names by divine command, for such as better suited the ancestors of nations and of the Prince of nations. The Romans carried their superstition so far as to change the name of Epidamnus to Dyrrachium. In fact, of such serious consequence were names considered in Greece, that Aristotle in his Rhetoric classes them among his heads of argument.

<sup>e</sup> "Eustathius has noted the anachronism in the word *ἐψηφισαν* in this passage." Herm.

not by my will indeed. But if a god foil him, even the coward may elude the braver man. And now what can I do? I that am manifestly abhorred of gods, and the Greek host detests me; while all Troy, and these her plains, are my foes? Whether shall I, having abandoned our naval station, and the sons of Atreus, to themselves, cross the Ægean sea for home? And what face shall I shew my father Telamon, appearing before him? How will he ever bear to look on me forlorn before him, destitute of the meed of valour<sup>f</sup>, whereof himself acquired the illustrious crown of glory? The deed is not to be borne,—but shall I then, advancing to the Trojan ramparts, alone with them alone engaging, and achieving some honourable deed, so fall at last? Nay, thus I must at all events pleasure the Atri-dæ<sup>g</sup>. This may not be: some attempt must be sought of such a nature, as that by it I may prove to my aged father, that, being his son, I am not naturally at least a spiritless coward. For it is base for a man who meets no change to rescue him from misery, to wish a length of life<sup>h</sup>. Since what pleasure hath one day, attaching to another, and procrastinating death<sup>i</sup>? I would not

<sup>f</sup> “Καλλιστεία proprie est *præmium pulchritudinis*, ut apud Lucianum in Dearum judicio. Hic simpliciter *præmium* valet, quod docent Lexica. Καλλιστεύειν esse *fortissime se gerere*, ex male intellecto Herodoti loco 7. 180. natum est.” Musgrave.

<sup>g</sup> That is, by his noble action; since on death he was at all events resolved.

<sup>h</sup> Such is the wish of Parolles in All’s Well that Ends Well.

<sup>i</sup> If Hermann’s reading *ἀναθεῖσα* be adopted, we must take *ἡμέρα παρ’ ἡμαρ* by itself. Hermann gives the passage thus. “What pleasure can day alternating with day present, when it does nothing but either add or take away from the necessity of dying?”



buy, at any price, that man who warms himself with empty hopes. No; or nobly to live, or to die nobly, becomes the generous man<sup>k</sup>. Thou hast heard all I have to say.

CH. None will ever say, Ajax, that thou hast spoken sentiments of supposititious growth, but [the genuine offspring] of thy own spirit. Yet desist, and give thy friends to prevail o'er thy purpose, dismissing these anxious thoughts.

TEC. Ajax, my lord, there is not a greater evil to mankind, than slavery's forced lot<sup>l</sup>. But I was begotten of a free father, a man powerful by his wealth among Phrygians, if any were. Yet now I am a slave; for so, I know not why, it seemed fit to the gods, and above all to thy hand. Wherefore, since that I have shared thy bed, I am a well-wisher to thee and thine, and conjure thee by Ephestian Jove<sup>m</sup>, and thy couch whereby thou wert united to me, do not think me deserving to get offensive language from thine enemies, leaving me a spoil for the hand of any. Since, shouldst thou die, and, being deceased, abandon me, bethink thee that on that very day I too, violently seized on by the Greeks, shall eat the bread of slavery with thy son. And some one among my tyrants shall say with bitter taunt, harrowing me by his words, "Behold the

<sup>k</sup> GUARD. What work is here?—Charmian, is this well done?

CHAR. It is well done, and fitting for a princess,

Descended of so many royal kings.

Ant. and Cleo. Act 5, sc. 2.

<sup>l</sup> Lobeck would exclude the idea of slavery from the Greek expression here, as unsuitable to Tecmessa's purpose.

<sup>m</sup> A most solemn adjuration, and used by Themistocles to Admetus, in his greatest need. Thuc. I.

consort of Ajax, who was of might preeminent amid our host,—what servitude, in exchange for how envied a lot, does she support!" Thus some one will say. And me fortune will drive to this; 'tis to thee and thy family words like these are a disgrace. But respect thy father, whom thou abandonest in forlorn old age: respect thy mother, allotted to the heritage of many years, who often implores the gods that thou mayest return home alive. And, O prince! compassionate thy son, in that, bereft of childhood's nurture, abandoned by thee, he will be thrust about by no friendly guardians: how much of ill this is, that thou at thy death wilt bequeath to him and me<sup>n</sup>. For to me there remains no longer any one to whom I can look, save thee, for thou hast annihilated my country with thy spear; and my mother and my father another fate took off to be in their deaths inhabitants of Hades<sup>o</sup>. What then could be to me a country in thy stead? what prosperity could I have? in thee is centred all my hope of safety.

<sup>n</sup> These sentiments find a parallel in those of the Sabine women in Livy; and the lamentation of Andromache throughout is very similar:—

An only child, once comfort of my pains,  
Sad product now of hopeless love, remains!  
No more to smile upon his sire, no friend  
To help him now, no father to defend!

Pope's II. B. XXII. l. 620.

<sup>o</sup> Hermann remarks on the gratuitous barbarity of making Ajax kill the mother of Tecmessa, and adopts Porson's reading, supposing, however, that there is a line omitted. According to him, the lines stand thus:

..... σὺ γάρ μοι πατρίδ' ᾗστωσας δορί,  
\* \* \* \* \*  
καὶ μητέρ' ἄλλη μοῖρα τὸν φύσαντά τε  
καθεῖλεν" Αἰδου θανάσιμους οἰκήτορας.

Nay, preserve the remembrance of me too. Believe me, it is fitting that memory should abide by a man, if any where he have received aught pleasurable<sup>P</sup>; for it is kindness that aye engenders kindness, but from whomsoever the recollection of a benefit received melts away, that man could never be of generous birth<sup>Q</sup>.

CH. Ajax, I could wish that thou didst feel pity in thy heart, even as I do, for then wouldst thou assent to her words.

AJ. Nay, largely shall she meet with approbation from me at least, if she but dare aright to execute the task enjoined.

TEC. Nay, my dear Ajax, for my part I will obey thee in every thing.

AJ. Go fetch me now my son, that I may see him.

TEC. Nay, but in alarm I rescued him from thee.

AJ. In these my woes? or what meanest thou?

TEC. Lest he, ill-fated, having haply fallen in thy way, should die.

AJ. This were, indeed, well suited to my fate.

TEC. Nay, therefore I guarded him, to prevent this.

AJ. I approve of the action and the forethought you practised.

TEC. By doing what then, in this case, can I profit you?

<sup>P</sup> Si bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quicquam

Dulce meum, miserere domus labantis, et istam,

Oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem.

Æn. IV. v. 317.

<sup>Q</sup> Brunck has paid no attention to Porson's remarks on the metre in this passage; but Lobeck has adopted the professor's emendation of Suidas. For just reasons against the other readings proposed by Porson, vid. Seale's *Metres*, p. 11.

AJ. Give me to speak to him, and see him before me.

TEC. Well, but he is at hand, in keeping of the attendants.

AJ. Why then delays he to vouchsafe his presence?

TEC. My boy, thy father calls thee. Bring him hither, whoever of the servants hast him in charge in thy hands.

AJ. Dost thou speak to one drawing near, or one who heeds not thy words?

TEC. Even now this attendant is conveying him from no great distance.

AJ. Bring, bring him hither, for he will not shudder at beholding this fresh slaughtered butchery, if he be truly in his father's ways my son. Nay, forthwith it is needful to break him in, as a colt, to the stern lore of his sire, and that he be rendered like him in nature. My child, be thou more fortunate than thy father, but in all else his counterpart, and thou canst not be a coward. Yet even now thus much I have to envy thee, for that thou art sensible of none of these present evils. For in feeling nought<sup>r</sup> is centred the sweetest life<sup>s</sup>, until thou learn to know what pleasure

<sup>r</sup> Ah! how regardless of their doom

The little victims play!

No sense have they of ills to come,

No care beyond to-day.

Gray.

<sup>s</sup> Hermann here inserts a line which Brunck on the authority of Stobæus had omitted, it is this:

τὸ μὴ φρονεῖν γάρ, κάρ' ἀνώδυνον κακόν.

Ajax admits ignorance to be an evil, but still asserts that, "where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise."

is, what pain. But when thou art arrived at this, it is thy duty to prove on thy father's foes, thyself how great, from how great a father thou art sprung. Till then be fostered by light gales, cherishing thy spring of life, the joy of this thy mother. There is no fear, I know, that any of the Greeks should insult thee with hateful contumely; no, though thou art far from me, such a watchful protector in Teucer shall I leave for thee, an unwearied guardian of thy nurture<sup>t</sup>, although at present he is gone far out of sight, busied in the chace of foes. But, O ye shielded warriors, seafaring race, to you also I enjoin this common favour, and announce ye to him my mandate, that he bring this my son to my home, and present him to Telamon and my mother, I mean Eriboëa<sup>u</sup>, that he may ever be the support of their old age, until they shall reach the dark chambers of the nether god. And mine arms let no masters of the games, nor he, my bane, set as a prize to the Greeks; but do thou, my son Eurysaces, take and keep thy namesake, my sevenfold shield infrangible; wielding it through the thickly sewed brace: my other arms in common shall anon be buried with me<sup>x</sup>. But take now with all speed this my son, and make fast the house, nor raise the tearful lament within my tent. A

<sup>t</sup> Lobeck praises, in his note on this passage, Reiske's emendation, who reads *ἔμπα, καὶ τανῦν*; and the scholiast on v. 122 says the Ionians use *ἔμπης*, the Attics, *ἔμπα* and *ἔμπα*.

<sup>u</sup> Eriboëa, sometimes called Peribœa, was daughter of Alcatous, king of Megara, and son of Pelops, and is said to have been sold by her father on suspicion of an intrigue with Telamon, and carried to Cyprus, whither Telamon followed and married her.

<sup>x</sup> This was a common custom in ancient times, as may be gathered from Thucydides, L. I. c. viii.

very piteous object, truly, is a woman. Close the door speedily: 'tis not the skilful leech's part to howl an incantation over a sore that asks the knife.

CH. I tremble at hearing this eagerness, for thy sharpened tongue likes me not.

TEC. Ajax, my lord, what canst thou purpose in thy mind to do?

AJ. Ask not, question not; best be resigned.

TEC. Ah me, how I despair! I conjure thee by thy child, and by the gods, abandon us not.

AJ. Too much thou vexest me; knowest thou not that I no longer am the gods' debtor<sup>y</sup> to be of service to any?

TEC. Good words be thine.

AJ. Speak to those that hear.

TEC. And wilt thou not be persuaded?

AJ. Thou pratest overmuch already.

TEC. Aye, for I fear me, prince.

AJ. Will ye not stay her quickly?

TEC. In heaven's name, be softened.

AJ. Methinks thou hast but a fool's wisdom, if thou purposest but now to school my temper.

CH. Illustrious Salamis, thou somewhere, rocked by ocean<sup>z</sup>, art situate in happiness<sup>a</sup>, ever conspicuous to

<sup>y</sup> A similar expression is found in Virgil:—

*Nos juvenem exanimam et nil jam coelestibus ullis*

*Debentem vano mœsti comitamur honore.*

Yet it would perhaps be going too far to say that Ajax meant nothing contemptuous to the gods.—Since writing the above note, Hermann's edition has appeared, and the translation is altered to suit that edition in this passage.

<sup>z</sup> This epithet, though perfectly suitable to Delos, appears rather mis-

all: while I, unhappy from time of old, am tarrying in Ida's meadowy pastures of the sheep, of no account<sup>b</sup>, continually worn away by regular and unvaried time; having a sorry hope that still I shall one day reach the abhorred and gloomy Pluto. And now the cureless Ajax is upon me, a fresh assailant<sup>c</sup>, alas! alas! co-mate of a heaven-sent frenzy; whom once, in former time, thou sentest forth a conqueror in furious war; but now, on the contrary, his senses all astray<sup>d</sup>, he has proved a deep affliction to his friends. But the former deeds of his hands, deeds of noblest valour, fell; aye, fell, thankless to the thankless; the unwise Atridæ. Surely, somewhere a mother<sup>e</sup> nursed in the lap of ancient days and hoar old age, when she shall have heard that he is diseased as with the sickness of the soul, hapless shall utter, not a dirge,—a dirge, nor plaint of the nightingale, that piteous bird, but shrill-toned shrieks will she wail forth; while blows, struck by her own hand, shall fall on her breasts, and rendings of her hoary hair. For

placed here; and Lobeck suggests, that as Æschylus has applied the term *θαλασσόπληκτος* to Salamis, it is probable Sophocles wrote *ἀλίπλακτος*. This reading is adopted by Hermann.

<sup>a</sup> The word *ναίω* is used in this sense by Homer, II. II. 626.

<sup>b</sup> Hermann proposes to read the passage thus: 'Ἰδαῖα μίμνω λειμώνι ἄποινα, μηνῶν ἀνήριθμος, *Idæa pratensia præmia expecto, mensium innumerabilis*. These *præmia pratensia* are the overthrow and sack of Troy.

<sup>c</sup> Ἐφεδρος is, in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, applied to Sophocles himself, and the Oxford translator has this note: "The *ἐφεδρος* (tertianus) was a combatant, who waited the decision of some trial of prowess in the games, with intent to offer himself as opponent to the conqueror," p. 169.

<sup>d</sup> Literally, "feeding apart from his senses."

<sup>e</sup> There is great beauty in the suppression of the name throughout this passage: it may in some measure be thought to resemble the veil of Timanthes.

better were he hiding in the grave, than hopelessly dis-tempered; who coming of his father's race the bravest of the hard-toiling Greeks, is no longer constant to his natural temper, but is wandering without it. Ah, wretched sire, what an insupportable calamity of thy child awaits thee to learn! such as no age of the *Æacidæ* hath ever yet fostered, at least save this man!

AJ. Time, the long, the countless, brings to light all that is unseen, and when disclosed conceals, nor is aught hopeless; no, both the terrible oath and the hardened spirit are his prize. For I, too, that lately was so firm in my dread purpose, like steel, the ice-brook's temper<sup>f</sup>, by this my wife here have been womaned in my speech; and I pity her [too much] to leave her a widow, and my child fatherless, amid foes. But I will go to the baths and meadows along the shore, that having cleansed off my pollutions I may escape the weighty anger of the goddess. And as I go, wherever I shall light on an untrodden spot, there will I hide this my sword, of weapons the most hateful, burying it in earth, there where none shall ever see it; but O may night and Hades guard it below. For from the hour wherein I took to my hand this, a present from Hector my deadliest foe, never to this day have I got aught acceptable from the Greeks. No, true is the popular adage, "The gifts of enemies are no gifts",

<sup>f</sup> βαφῇ σίδηρος ὤς. "Tenuiora ferramenta oleo restingui mos est, ne aqua in fragilitatem durentur. The scholiast has a note to the same purpose. We see then that the allusion will apply to what follows as well as what precedes it in the text.

§ "By what argument it may from this verse be gathered that the *Medea* of Euripides is older than the *Ajax* of Sophocles, Elmsley has stated at the six hundred and fifth line of the former." Hermann.



nor profitable." Henceforth, therefore, will we know how to submit to the gods, and learn to respect the sons of Atreus. They are our rulers, therefore we must give way. Why not? for all that is terrible and all that is mightiest gives way to office<sup>h</sup>. First, snow-paced winters give place to fruitful summer, and the orb of murky night retires for the day with his white steeds to kindle his light<sup>i</sup>, and the blast of the dreadful winds hath lulled the roaring main, nay, all-o'erpowering sleep looses where he hath bound, nor always holds us captive. And how shall we not know moderation? Since, for my part, I am even now aware that our enemy is so far to be hated by us, as though he may yet again be our friend; and to my friend I will be willing thus far by aiding to be of service, as if he were not always to remain so<sup>k</sup>. For to the many among men the haven of fellowship is faithless: but in all this it

<sup>h</sup> There is a passage very similar to this, which it may not be useless to quote, whether as an argument to support Shakespeare's claim to the play whence it comes, by the evident marks of his style which it bears, or to prove an old assertion, that in him is contained the finest study of the English language:—

The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre,  
Observe degree, priority, and place,  
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,  
Office, and custom, in all line of order.

Troilus and Cressida.

<sup>i</sup> See Milton, Book VII. and Thomson's Ode to the Seasons.

<sup>k</sup> This is the sentiment to which Cicero alludes, de Amicitia, c. 16: "Negabat ullam vocem inimiciorem amicitiae potuisse reperiri, quam ejus, qui dixisset, ita amare oportere, ut si aliquando esset osurus: nec vero se adduci posse, ut hoc, quemadmodum putaretur, a Biante esse dictum crederet, qui sapiens habitus esset unus e septem; sed impuri cujusdam, aut ambitiosi, aut omnia ad suam potentiam revocantis, esse sententiam."

will be well. Do thou, woman, having retired within, pray to the gods continually to accomplish what my heart desires: and do ye, my clansmen, do me this honour alike with her. And signify to Teucer, should he return, to look well to me, and at the same time be a friend to you. For I go thither, whither go I must; but do ye what I tell you, and soon, perhaps, you may learn that I, though now unfortunate, have found deliverance.

CH. With love I thrill, and overjoyed I soar aloft. O Pan, O Pan, thou ocean-wanderer, show thyself from the craggy ridge of snow-beaten Cyllene<sup>1</sup>, thou princely founder of heaven's choir, that companying with me thou mayest essay the self-taught Gnossian and Nysæan dances: for now it is my care to lead the chorus. And mayest thou, Apollo, Delian king, coming over the Icarian sea<sup>m</sup>, accord me thy distinguished presence, for ever kind. For Mars hath dispelled the heavy affliction from his eyes. Io! Io! now, now again, O Jove, is the white propitious light of day with us, that we may approach the swift vessels that speed on the brine: since Ajax is again forgetful of his troubles, and has again performed the most sacred ordinances of the gods, with strictest observance worshipping. Time, the mighty, withers all away. Nor would I pronounce aught im-

<sup>1</sup> Cyllene is a mountain in Arcadia, the birthplace of Mercury, who shared with Pan the right of patronage there. Gnossus was a town of Crete, celebrated for its being the birthplace of Ariadne. There were several cities of the name of Nysa, of which the most renowned was in India, said to be the place where Bacchus was educated, and whence he derived his name Dionysius.

<sup>m</sup> The name "Icarian" was given to that part of the Ægean sea which encircles Mycone and Gyaros, the supposed scene of Icarus's fall.

possible, at least when unexpectedly Ajax has repented of his wrath and dire feuds with the Atridæ.

MESSENGER.

My friends, I would first tell you<sup>n</sup>: Teucer is just arrived from the Mysian rocks<sup>o</sup>: but as he advances into the middle of the camp, he is reviled by all the Greeks at once: for, having discovered him coming slowly from a distance, they encircled him all round; and then began to assail him with reproaches from this side and that; and there was not one who did not, calling him the brother of the madman and traitor to the army; that he should not save himself from death by being thoroughly mangled with stones. So that they came to such a pitch, that their swords, drawn from the scabbards, were passed across by their hands. But their strife, having run to its greatest length, ceases by words of reconciliation from the elders. But where's Ajax, that I may tell him all this? for to our lords it is our duty to disclose all our tale.

CH. He is not within, but has just disappeared, having coupl'd new plans with new deportment.

MESS. Woe! woe! woe! Then he who sent me on this errand, sent me too tardily, or I was slow in coming.

<sup>n</sup> Musgrave conjectures, that in allusion to the well-known custom of heralds among the ancients, we should read φίλοι τὸ πρῶτον: Lobeck removes the period at the end of the line, and joins the two last of the above three words, retaining φίλοι. Hermann follows Musgrave.

<sup>o</sup> For mention of Mysia, see Herodotus, L. I. Of this country, which was in alliance with Troy, Telephus was monarch at the time of the Trojan war.

CH. But what is there too tardily managed in this matter?

MESS. Teucer forbade to let the man go forth from within his abode, before he himself should be present.

CH. Nay, but look you, he is gone, having betaken himself to the best of purposes, that he may by reconciliation with the gods be freed from their wrath.

MESS. These thy words are fraught with abundant folly, if indeed Calchas prophesy aught with right judgment<sup>P</sup>.

CH. What is its nature? and what knowing of this matter [prophesies he?]

MESS. Thus much I know, and chanced to be present. For from the council and the kingly circle Calchas having retired by himself, apart from the Atridae, and placed his right hand in Teucer's in friendly guise, told him and enjoined him by all manner of means to confine Ajax throughout the day now shining, to-day, this very day, within his tent; nor let him go and suffer him to pass, if ever he would see him again alive: for on this day only the wrath of celestial Minerva persecutes him: so spake he and said. For the seer declared, that overgrown and unwieldy bodies are wont to fall under severe misfortunes by divine agency<sup>Q</sup>, when one that springs from a mortal stock is not of consequence minded as a mortal should. But he, at the very moment that he sallied forth from home, was found of his father, advising him well, too inconsider-

<sup>P</sup> This distinguished seer possessed his inspiration by birthright, being the grandson of Idmon, the soothsayer that attended the Argonautic expedition.

<sup>Q</sup> Vis consilii expers mole ruit sua.

ate<sup>r</sup>; for he strictly charges him, “Son, be thy wish to conquer with the spear, but be it to conquer through the gods.” But he with haught and senseless vaunt replied, “Father, in concert with the gods even one that was nothing might obtain the victory; but I, even without them, am assured I shall snatch to me this glory.” So proud a boast did he utter. Then, a second time, to immortal Pallas, when urging him she bade him turn his gory hand against the foe: then answered he, in words dire and unutterable, “Queen, be thou at the side of the other Greeks; where I am, the battle never shall break through<sup>s</sup>.” By words such as these he earned the ruthless anger of the goddess, being of a spirit unsuitable to man. But if indeed he live to day, we haply may be, with heaven’s aid, his preservers. Thus much the prophet said, but Teucer instantly sends me from the conclave, bearing these his mandates to thee to observe: but if we are foiled of our purpose, then is the hero no more, if there be skill in Calchas.

<sup>r</sup> The reason which is here given for the misfortune of Ajax is precisely that of which Aristotle approves, who, after having rejected the two extremes of virtue and vice, proceeds to state his idea of a character adapted to tragedy: “And such a man is he, who neither in virtue and uprightness is transcendent, nor yet changes his lot to misfortune through vice and depravity, but one that does it through some error, and that a man of high renown and prosperity, such as were Œdipus and Thyestes.” Poetics, sect. 25.

<sup>s</sup> Homer represents Ajax of a temper in some degree resembling this, though not so haughtily, in a prayer which Longinus has quoted and commended:—

Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἀλλὰ σὸ ρῦσαι ὑπ’ ἥeros νίας Ἀχαιῶν,  
 Ποίησον δ’ αἶθρην. δδς δ’ ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδεσθαι,  
 Ἐν δὲ φάει καὶ δλεσσόν.

CH. O wretched Tecmessa, of hapless race, come forth and look on this man, what manner of words he utters. For this cuts to the quick, that none may joy therein.

TEC. Why rouse ye me, miserable that I am, from my seat, when but now respited from exhaustless ills?

CH. Listen to this man, since he comes bringing us matter that concerns Ajax, whereat I grieve.

TEC. Ah me! what sayest thou, man? Are we then undone?

MESS. I know not thy circumstances, but I have no hopes of Ajax, if he be from home.

TEC. Well then, he is from home, and therefore I am in agonies at what thou hast to say<sup>t</sup>.

MESS. Teucer sends charge to confine him under close cover of his tent, nor let him go out alone.

TEC. But where is Teucer, and wherefore says he this?

MESS. He is just arrived: and apprehends<sup>u</sup> that this departure of Ajax, that he tells, is fatal.

<sup>t</sup> Lobeck places a note of interrogation after ὠδίνειν.

<sup>u</sup> "Bothe has ingeniously conjectured ἐλπίζειν φέρεν. But no correction is needed, if the passage be but rightly taken, and one resort not to such sillinesses (inepta) as to make ἐλπίζειν mean even *metuere*; for not in all cases, but where it suits the sense, is this verb introduced in such a manner as to be seemingly used to denote fear, though in reality it is to be taken as expressing hope. In the present instance when the messenger says, *Sperat Teucer se hunc Ajacis exitum funestum nunciaturum esse*, he means that Teucer has a hope that, by reporting the fatal issue about to follow Ajax on going abroad, he shall effect his detention at home for that day." Does the learned professor (Hermann) mean that ἐλπίζειν cannot be applied to our expectation of an evil? To say nothing of Polybius, who so uses it, B. 9. C. 6. sec. 9. See Thucydides, 1. 1. and 7. 61.—ἐλπὶς τοῦ φόβου.

TEC. Unhappy me! having learnt it from what possible person?

MESS. From Thestor's prophet-son, on this present day, that it brings him life or death.

TEC. Ah me! friends, assist me against this emergency of fortune<sup>x</sup>, and hasten,—some that Teucer may come quickly, and some to the western ~~bends of the mountains~~ *hills*, some to the eastern go and search out the hero's ill-omened sally. For I know that I was deceived by the man, and an outcast from my former favour with him. Ah me! my child, what shall I do? not sit here,—no; I will be gone thither whithersoever I shall have strength to. Let us away, let us hasten hence; 'tis not the moment for inaction, for those at least who wish to save a man that hurries to death.

CH. I am ready to be gone, nor will I shew it merely in words, for speed of action and of feet at once shall follow them<sup>y</sup>.

AJ. The slayer is set upright, where it best may pierce, (if one have leisure even for consideration,) the

See also Arist. Aves, v. 956. ed. Brunck. Hermann's own interpretation is surely farfetched.

<sup>x</sup> This passage supports an opinion of Lobeck already stated, since here we find no allusion to slavery, although the same expression is used at v. 485. See the note on that line.

<sup>y</sup> The departure of the Chorus here in order to give room for the exhibition of Ajax' death is censured by Brunck, but defended by Lobeck on the example of Æschylus in the Eumenides, and Euripides in Helen and Alcestis. And he also remarks, that the difficulty which induced Æschylus to relate the death of Ajax, namely, the open nature of the stage, was evaded by Sophocles, who carries his hero as far as possible back from the eyes of the spectators to the inner scene. As Potter justly observes, this single speech of Ajax is worth all the unities, an attempt to maintain which has been so lately made, and ably refuted.

gift of Hector, a man of foreigners most detested by me, and most hateful to my sight. But it has fixed itself in the hostile soil of Troy, fresh sharpened on the steel-consuming whetstone. And I myself, having well prepared, have fixed it, the kindest friend to Ajax in furtherance of his speedy death. Thus well am I furnished. But, after all this, do thou first, O Jupiter, assist me, for it is but reason. Nor will I ask of thee to possess an ample boon. Send for me some messenger, carrying the evil tidings to Teucer, who may be the first to take me up when fallen on this fresh-sprinkled sword: and that I may not, having been ere that discovered by any of my foes, be hurled a cast-away to dogs and birds a prey. This much I beg of thee, O Jove; and with thee I call on the nether Mercury, conductor of ghosts, to lull me softly to repose, when I have burst through my side with this my sword, by a bound quick and without a struggle. I call too, the ever-virgins to my aid; them, ever beholding all the sufferings of mortality, the awful Furies, with gigantic stride, to learn of me how I, unhappy, am done to death by Atreus' sons; and may they grasp them all together, villains as they are, by a death most vile, and doomed to utter destruction: even as they look on me falling self-murdered, so self-murdered may they perish by their dearest offspring<sup>2</sup>. Go, ye swift and avenging

<sup>2</sup> Musgrave considers this passage to refer to the death of Ulysses by his son Telegonus. Certainly Agamemnon did not fall by the contrivance of any of his children; and as for Menelaus, he, if we may credit Homer, was carried to the islands of the blest, without having tasted death; how deservedly, we may gather from Herodotus' account of his conduct in Egypt. The curse of Ajax is remarkably grand and awful, but will hardly bear comparison with the celebrated imprecation in lord Byron's *Giaour*.



Furies, banquet on them, the whole armed host spare not. And thou, that makest the high heaven thy chariot course, O sun<sup>a</sup>! when thou shalt look on the land of my fathers, checking thy golden-backed rein, announce my woes and my fate to my aged sire, and the wretched mother that nursed me. Full surely she, unhappy, when she shall hear this report, will send forth a dreadful wail throughout the whole city. But it avails not to lament thus vainly: no, the deed must be done, and with all speed. O death, death, come now and look upon me; although thee, indeed, there also shall I meet and accost. But thee, O present brilliance of the lustrous day, and the car-borne sun, I salute now for the last time, and never again hereafter. O light! O sacred soil of mine own country, Salamis! O floor of my father's hearth, and thou, illustrious Athens! and race that shared my nurture! and ye fountains, and rivers here, and the Trojan plains I address; farewell, my fosterers: this his last word does Ajax speak to you: all else will I tell to the dead in Hades<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> This most sublime idea has been well imitated by Seneca:

O decus mundi, radiate Titan,  
Dic sub Aurora positis Sabæis,  
Dic sub Occasu positis Iberis,  
Dic ad æternos properare manes  
Herculem et regnum canis inquieti.

Herc. Æt. v. 1516.

<sup>b</sup> It may be thought that the play should have ended with a speech so sublime as the preceding; but Hermann observes, that the spirit of the ancient tragedy would by no means permit the omission of the funeral lamentations, and that in the cruelty of the Spartan Menelaus there must have been something very acceptable to Athenian ears.

SEMI-CH. Double double toil and trouble<sup>c</sup>! for whither, whither, aye, whither went I not? and yet no place knows to learn [of thee.] Hist! hist! again I hear some noise.

SEMI-CH. 'Tis but ours, the ship's company, partners in your voyage.

SEMI-CH. Well, and what then?

SEMI-CH. All the western side of the fleet has been paced [by us.]

SEMI-CH. And hast thou then got——

SEMI-CH. Trouble in abundance, and nought more to be seen.

SEMI-CH. Nay, nor to me then, on the measured track in the east, does the hero any where present himself to view.

CH. Who, who of the industrious fishermen, plying his sleepless quest for prey, or who of the Olympian gods<sup>d</sup>, or who acquainted with the torrent rivers of the Bosphorus<sup>e</sup>, if haply anywhere he descries the chief of savage spirit roaming, will tell me, for grievous it is that I, a wanderer, should approach no fortunate course of my lengthened toils; nay, nor discover where an enfeebled man like him is.

TEC. Alas! ah me!

<sup>c</sup> Literally, "trouble brings trouble to trouble."

<sup>d</sup> The feminine adjective is used with *θεῶν* here by a similar form to *Ἑλλὰς ἀνὴρ*, and others of the same sort, on which see Porson on Orest. 264. Phœniss. 1038. and Lobeck on Aj. 323. Herm.

<sup>e</sup> *Ἰδρις* may be rendered, "haunting, or dwelling near." So Lucian:

*Gens conscia Nilo.*

*Pharsal. L. I. v. 20.*

Hermann, however, refers it to *ποταμῶν*, which is more poetical.

CH. Whose cry issued from the neighbouring grove?

TEC. Alas, unhappy me!

CH. I see the hapless captive bride Tecmessa overwhelmed amid this grief.

TEC. I am lost, undone; I am utterly ruined, my friends.

CH. What is it?

TEC. Here is our Ajax lying just now newly slain, folded over his secreted<sup>f</sup> sword.

CH. Alas, and woe is me! for my return! Ah me! prince, thou hast killed thy fellow-seaman here. Unhappy me! O lady, sad at heart!

TEC. 'Tis time to wail, since such is his fate.

CH. By whose hand then could he ill-fated have ever effected this?

TEC. Himself, by his own hand; 'tis plain, for this his sword stuck in the ground, whereon he fell, convicts him.

CH. Ah me! for this my misery! 'twas then alone, by friends unfenced, thou didst shed thy blood: while I, the all-senseless, the all-ignorant, neglected thee. Where, where lies the intractable Ajax of ill-omened name?

TEC. Mark me, he is not to be gazed on. No, I will shroud him in this enfolding robe from head to foot, since none that was his friend could bear to look on him exhaling upwards at the nostrils<sup>g</sup>, and out of the

<sup>f</sup> For *κρυφαίῳ* Musgrave proposes here to read *καθαίμῳ*, and adds, "desideratur certe epithetum, quod præsentem ensis conditionem declarat."

<sup>g</sup> Wakefield (Sylv. Crit. p. 104.) proposes to read *πρὸς ῥινός*, and quotes Statius:—

Corruit, extremisque animæ singultibus errans

Alterutris, nunc ore venit, nunc vulnere sanguis.

Theb. III. 90.

red gash, the gore now blackened from his self-inflicted death-wound. Ah me, what shall I do? What friend will bear thee off? Where is Teucer? I trust that he may come, if come he should, in time to help lay out for burial this his fallen brother! Ah luckless Ajax! what thou wert! what thou art! deserving to meet with mourning, aye, even from thy foes<sup>h</sup>.

CH. Wretched man! thou wert then bent, at some time, to accomplish thine evil lot of endless woes: such words wouldst thou sigh out all night and day, stern heart, of evil sound to the Atridæ, with deadly passion. Surely that time was a chief source of troubles, when the contest of superior valour was proposed about Achilles' arms.

TEC. Ah me, me!

CH. The pang of genuine grief pierces to thine heart, I know.

TEC. Ah me, me!

CH. I can well believe thou sighest thus doubly, lady, but now despoiled of such a friend as this.

TEC. 'Tis thine to fancy all this, but mine too truly to feel.

CH. I confess it.

TEC. Ah me, my child, to what a yoke of slavery pass we! what taskmasters are over us!

CH. Alas! in this thy sorrow thou hast made mention of the unutterable<sup>i</sup> deed of the two unfeeling Atridæ: but may heaven avert it.

<sup>h</sup> And if thou tell'st the heavy story right,  
Upon my soul, the hearers will shed tears;  
Yea, e'en my foes will shed fast-falling tears,  
And say—Alas! it was a piteous deed. 3d Pt. of Hen. VI. Act 1.

<sup>i</sup> Musgrave proposes ἀραυδῶν, rejecting the interpretation of ἀραυδῶν by infandum.

some fear-  
ing  
in their  
way?

TEC. Nay, all this had never stood 'as it does, but with heaven's will.

CH. But far too heavy is this burden they have brought upon us.

TEC. And yet such affliction as this does the dread goddess Pallas, child of Jove, gender, to gratify Ulysses.

CH. Aye, verily, the chief of many toils in his darkling soul mocks us with scorn, and laughs with abundant laughter at the madman's sorrows, alas! alas! and with him Atreus' two royal sons hearing them.

TEC. Then let them laugh and joy over the woes of Ajax. Perhaps, mark me! though when alive they desired him not, they will mourn him dead, in the needful time of battle<sup>k</sup>. For the weak-minded, while they hold in their hands aught good, knew it not, ere some one have cast it from him. More bitter has his death been to me than sweet to them<sup>l</sup>, but delightful to himself. For all that he longed to possess he gained for himself, the very death he wished. How then could they laugh out against him? By the gods he died, not by them<sup>m</sup>,—no. Then let Ulysses, with empty [vaunts,]

<sup>k</sup> See Brunck's note.

For it so falls out,  
That what we have we prize not to the worth,  
Whiles we enjoy it: but being lacked and lost,  
Why then we rack the value, then we find  
The virtue that possession would not shew us  
Whiles it was ours.

Much Ado about Nothing, Act 4. Sc. 1.

<sup>l</sup> Μᾶλλον is understood. Thus Homer:—

Βούλομ' ἐγὼ λαὸν σόον εἶμεναι, ἢ ἀπολέσθαι.

B. I. v. 117.

<sup>m</sup> To fall by the hands of an enemy worthy of them, was often a con-

be insolent: for they have Ajax no longer; no, but having bequeathed to me sorrows and lamentations, he is departed.

TEUCER.

Ah me! me!

CH. Be silent; for methinks I hear the voice of Teucer, crying out in a tone that intently dwells on this calamity.

TEU. O dearest Ajax! O person of my brother! hast thou then dealt with thyself even as report prevails?

CH. Teucer, the man is no more! of this be assured.

TEU. Then woe is me, for my heavy affliction!

CH. Since it is so——

TEU. Unhappy me! unhappy!

CH. 'Tis time to groan.

TEU. O deep and dire calamity!

CH. Too much so, Teucer.

TEU. Ah, hapless? But what of his child? Where in this Trojan land is he?

CH. Alone at the tents.

TEU. Wilt not thou with all speed bring him hither, lest any of his foes lay hold of him, as the whelp of a widowed lioness? Go, bestir thyself, bear aid. All, mark me! are wont to deride the fallen dead<sup>a</sup>.

solation to the dying warriors of antiquity, and is so used by Philoctetes to Neoptolemus, on his hearing of Achilles' death. Thus Turnus in Virgil:—

——— Non me tua fervida terrent

Dicta, ferox : Dī me terrent, et Jupiter hostis.

Æn. XII. 894.

<sup>a</sup> Of this savage custom among the ancients, Homer has left us many

CH. Nay, moreover, while yet alive, O Teucer, the hero left a charge that thou shouldst care for Eurysaces, even as now thou art caring.

TEU. Oh thou, of all spectacles to me the most painful that I have ever with mine eyes beheld; thou too, a journey that of all journeys hast surely most anguished my heart, even that which I have now come, O dearest Ajax, when I heard thy fate, following up and tracing it step by step: for the report concerning thee, swift as if some god were the agent, pervaded all the Greek host, how that thou wert dead and gone. Which I miserable hearing, while I was absent from it, was inwardly groaning, but now that I see it, am utterly undone. Ah me! Come, uncover, that I may see the whole evil. O sight dreadful to look on, and of bitter daring, of how many pangs having deeply sown the seeds for me, dost thou wither! For whither can I betake myself, to what manner of people, I that nowhere aided thee in thy troubles? Doubtless will Telamon, thy father as he is mine, receive me with kind aspect<sup>o</sup>, and, haply, with mild air, returning without thee. For how should he not, whose wont it is not, even when fortunate, to wear a smile of more than common pleasure? What will he suppress? What reproach will he not utter? That I, the spurious offspring of his captive in war<sup>p</sup>; that I have by cowardice and

examples, and none more striking than in the case of the fallen Hector, which passage Pope has in his translation explained away. II. B. XXII.

• Ironically.

<sup>p</sup> Teucer, as he himself afterwards states, was the son of Telamon by Hesione, daughter of Laomedon, who had been selected by Hercules as a reward to the king of Salamis for his services in that hero's expedition to Troy. The event justified these apprehensions of Teucer; and to avoid his father's indignation, he fled to Cyprus, where he founded Salamis.

effeminacy betrayed thee, dearest Ajax, or in treason, that I might possess thy sovereignty and patrimony when dead. Such words will he, a man of passionate temper, morose with age, vent forth, angered to strife by a mere nothing. And in the end shall I, repulsed, be an outcast from my country, (noted in story as a slave, and no freeman.) Thus much at home: but here, at Troy, many are my foes, and little is there to profit me. And all this have I incurred by thy death. Ah me! what shall I do? how shall I tear thee off from this thy fierce and hasty sword, the destroyer whereby thou didst expire? Knewest thou how in time Hector, even though dead, was doomed to be thy destruction? Observe ye, by the gods I ask, the fate of these two men. Hector, having been fast bound with the very girdle wherewith he was presented from Ajax<sup>9</sup>, by the steed-drawn car was ever racked and mangled until he breathed out his life: while Ajax, possessing this, the gift of Hector, perished by its means from a mortal fall. And was it not a Fury that forged this cimeter, and Hades the other, that fierce artificer? I then would say, that the gods devised both this and every thing else for ever to mankind. But to whomsoever in opinion this is not pleasing, let him fondly cling to other, and me to this.

CH. Extend no length of speech, but bethink thee how thou wilt commit to the tomb thy brother, and what thou presently wilt parley. For I descry a foe-man, and haply he may, as would a villain, come forth to laugh at our misfortunes.

TEU. But what man from the army is it that thou seest?

<sup>9</sup> This is not found in Homer's account.

up a slave by his words & not a freeman



CH. Menelaus, for whom, in fact, we undertook this voyage.

TEU. I see him, for, near as he is, he is not hard to recognize<sup>r</sup>.

MENELAUS.

Ho thou! to thee I speak. See thou lay not out with thine hands this corpse, but leave it as it is.

TEU. For what purpose hast thou spent thus much in words?

MEN. As my pleasure, and his who sways the host.

TEU. Wilt thou not then say what cause alleging?

MEN. Because that<sup>s</sup>, having hoped we should bring him from home both friend and ally to Greeks, we have, on inquiry, found him out to be more hostile than the Phrygians; who having plotted destruction to the whole army at once, went forth armed by night against it to subdue it with his spear. And had not some god baffled this his attempt, we had lain victims to the very fate himself hath met, murdered by a death most ignominious, while he would have lived. But heaven now hath wrought the change, that his violence should fall on the sheep and flocks. Wherefore there lives not the man of so much power as to entomb his

<sup>r</sup> Probably by his haughty air and step.

'Tis he, I ken the manner of his gait,  
He rises on the toe; that spirit of his  
In aspiration lifts him from the earth.

Troilus and Cressida, Act 4. Sc. 5.

<sup>s</sup> This is in accordance with Aristotle's rule, who, in his enumeration of those towards whom anger is felt, mentions friends before enemies, as the injury, being unexpected, is the greater. Rhet. B. II. c. ii.

body in the grave ; but an outcast on the pale sand, he shall become food for the birds that coast along the brine. And therefore assume thou no fierce indignation; for although we could not master him alive, at all events we will rule him dead, although thou be unwilling, perforce chastening him with our hands. For there is no instance in which, while he lived, he was ever willing to attend to my words; and yet it is the proof of a bad man, that he, a private citizen, should in nothing deign to listen to those who are set over him. For never<sup>t</sup>, neither in a state could laws be rightly carried on, where fear has not been established, nor surely could an army endure a commander with submission any longer, having no barrier of respect and shame. But an individual, though he be large of person, it behoves to think that he may hereafter fall, though by a puny ill<sup>u</sup>. For to whom both fear and the sense of honour attach, that man be sure carries with him his safety; but where it is allowed him to be insolent and do whate'er he pleases, think that at some future time this state, though it sped before a favouring gale, will sink to the bottom. But let me ever be

<sup>t</sup> In *Troilus and Cressida* the speech of Ulysses in council enlarges this sentiment beautifully: the whole is too long for insertion, but parts of it seem almost paraphrased:—

Take but degree away, untune that string,  
And, hark, what discord follows!       \*       \*  
\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Force should be right, or, rather, right and wrong  
(Between whose endless jar justice resides)  
Should lose their names, and so should justice too.

<sup>u</sup> "Nihil est tam firmum, cui non periculum sit etiam ab invalido."

fixed in a wholesome awe<sup>x</sup>, and let me not think that after doing what I please, I shall not pay back in turn what pains me. Alternately this comes upon us. Before now, this man was a fiery insolent; now I in turn am high-minded, and command thee not to bury him, lest that by burying him thyself sink into the tomb.

CH. Menelaus, do not, having set forth wise sentiments, become in consequence thyself an insulter of the dead.

TEU. Never again, my friends, could I wonder at a man, who, being nothing by birth, consequently errs, when they who fancy they are born of a noble family, err in their speech with words such as these. Come, tell me again from the beginning, canst thou say thou didst take and bring this man hither as an ally to the Greeks. Did not he himself sail out as his own master? Wherein art thou his commander? and wherein is it allowed thee to sway the people that he led forth from home? Thou camest as prince of Sparta, and not as commanding my people; nor is there where the law of rule was laid down for thee to order him, any more than ~~he~~ thee. Thou camest hither under the command of others, not general of the whole army, that thou shouldst ever lord it over Ajax. No, rule those whom thou dost rule, and in haughty terms chastise them: but my brother here, whether thou forbid, or the other chieftain, will I duly commit to the tomb, fearless of thy mouthing. Since in no wise for thy wife's sake did he campaign, like

<sup>x</sup> "This is said by Menelaus in perfect conformity with the Spartan institutions; which nation built a small temple to Fear close by the throne of the Ephori." *Lobeck*. Yet Pericles, in his funeral oration, has claimed it preeminently for his countrymen. V. Thuc. II. 37.

adventurers ever busy, but for his oath's<sup>y</sup>, whereby he was bound, and not for thee, since he valued not the worthless. Wherefore come and bring with thee hither more heralds, and the general: but for thy rant I would not turn me, so long as thou shalt be such as thou art.

CH. Nay, on the other hand, I like not such words in misfortune; for harsh reproofs, mark me, though they be but too just, are biting.

MEN. Methinks our archer thinks not little of himself<sup>z</sup>.

TEU. No, for 'twas no sordid art I acquired.

MEN. Thou wouldst be likely to boast somewhat largely, couldst thou bear a shield.

TEU. Even unarmed I were a match for thee at any rate, though mailed<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>y</sup> The story is, that Tyndarus, father of Helen, bound all her suitors by strict oaths to maintain the cause of him whom she should choose as her husband, and resist or revenge any attempt to carry her off. Thucydides, however, gives a different opinion in his first book, and considers Agamemnon to have exercised a feudal authority over the other chiefs that composed the Grecian force.

<sup>z</sup> The archers were reckoned among the *ψιλοι*, or light-armed troops of the Greeks, and accounted inferior to the Oplites. Homer (Il. 8.) mentions the manner of Teucer's fighting, and his retiring behind his brother's shield for protection after the discharge of his arrows. For an example of the contempt in which bowmen were held, Musgrave refers to a dispute of Lycus in Euripides, Herc. Fur. 158. The *Lysistrata* and *Acharnians* of Aristophanes likewise shew their low estimation of archers and archery at Athens.

<sup>a</sup> Thrice is he arm'd that hath his quarrel just;  
And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel,  
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

MEN. A pretty spirit this that thy tongue nurtures!

TEU. Yes, in a just cause it is allowable to be high-spirited.

MEN. What, is it just that he should prosper, having slain me?

TEU. Having slain thee! Thou hast spoken a wonder indeed, if thou thought dead livest.

MEN. I do, for heaven rescues me, but for his part I am no more.

TEU. Having by the gods been saved, do not now dishonour the gods.

MEN. What, should I impugn the divine laws?

TEU. Yes, if thou art here to forbid the burial of the dead.

MEN. Mine own enemies at least for myself I do; for it is not fitting.

TEU. What, did Ajax ever confront thee as a foe?

MEN. I hated him who hated me: thou knewest this thyself.

TEU. Aye, for thou wast found of him a fraudulent voter.

MEN. That slip was made by the judges, not me.

TEU. Many a crime mightest thou wickedly and fraudfully commit in secret.

MEN. These words are coming on to annoyance for some one.

TEU. No more so methinks than we shall annoy.

MEN. One thing I will tell thee. This fellow must not be entombed.

TEU. And do thou in return hear<sup>b</sup>; this man shall presently be buried.

<sup>b</sup> Here Brunck defends the future middle as used in an active sense;

MEN. Once ere now saw I a man daring of tongue, urging on his crew to sail in stormy weather, in whom thou mightest not have found the power of speech, when by the peril of the storm he was encompassed; no, hidden under his cloak he gave himself up for any one of the seamen that would to trample on. And so also thee and thine unbridled tongue a mighty storm, bursting forth from a little cloud, might haply put down in thy tedious clamour.

TEU. And I too have beheld a man fraught with folly, who was insulting the calamities of his neighbours. And then one like to me in person, and in temper similar, having looked upon him, spake words such as these: "Man, treat not the dead with injury, for if thou wilt do so, know thou shalt be punished." Thus, being by, did he admonish that luckless wight. But mark, I see him; and he can be, to my thinking, none else than thou. What, have I spoken riddles?

MEN. I will be gone. For base were it, if any one were to hear such a thing, for one who can use force to punish by words.

TEU. Crawl hence now, for in me too is it most base to listen to a trifler that prates unmeaning words.

CH. The conflict of a mighty quarrel will ensue. But speeding, Teucer, as best thou canst, be quick to look out a hollow grave for Ajax<sup>c</sup>, where he shall

but Lobeck has produced instances from Sophocles himself, (Æd. Tyr. 544.) and other approved Attic writers, (Xen. Anab. II. 5.) which seem to favour the substitution of *ὁ δ' ἀντάκουσον ἐν τόδ'.*

<sup>c</sup> Sophocles has said nothing of the body of Ajax being burnt, that being a privilege denied to him on the authority of Chalcas, who declared the holy element of fire to be polluted by consuming therein the remains of suicides. Philostratus in Heroicis.

possess his mouldering sepulchre by mortals forgotten.

TEU. Nay more, here at hand are in very season the wife and child of this my brother, to deck out the tomb of the unfortunate dead. Come hither, my boy, and standing near, as a suppliant, touch thy father that begot thee. And sit thou his petitioner, holding in thy hands my hair<sup>d</sup>, and hers here, and thine own the third, a suitor's wealth. But if any one from the army would pluck thee forcibly from this corpse, be the villain, as a villain should, an unburied outcast from his country, mowed down root and branch with all his race, even thus as I cut this lock of hair. Take it, my child, and keep it, nor let any move thee, but having fallen on the body cling fast. And do not ye stand close by him as women instead of men, but protect him until I come, having taken order for the burial of Ajax, though none permit.

CH. What then will be the last? in how long will close the tale of fast fleeting [*or wide wandering*] years<sup>e</sup>, that ever brings upon me the ceaseless grievance of warlike toils along the dank Troy, the dire reproach of Greeks? Would that that man had first entered the boundless æther, or Hades, our universal home, who shewed the Greeks the common use in war of hateful arms. Ah, toils, of toils the parents! For he was

<sup>d</sup> The custom of consecrating their hair was very common among the ancients; and, in Euripides, we find Electra condemning Helen for sparing her locks. Orestes, L. 128. So also Achilles, at the funeral of Patroclus, cuts off the hair he had vowed to his native river Spercheius, and his example was followed, out of respect to the dead, by the other Greeks. II. XXIII. 135.

<sup>e</sup> "Our years of many wanderings" is more natural.

man's ruin<sup>f</sup>. He hath appointed me to company neither with the joy of chaplets, nor of deep goblets, nor the dulcet harmony of flutes, the wretch, nor to linger o'er the nightly luxury of love; no, from love, alas, he has debarred me. And thus uncared-for I am lying, my hair continually drenched with fast-falling dews<sup>g</sup>, memorials of doleful Troy. And truly up to this time the valiant Ajax was my bulwark from nightly terror, and the arrow [by day<sup>h</sup>;] but now he is undone by a hateful doom; what delight then, what pleasure will ever again attend me? O could I be where beetles o'er the main the headland chafed by the wave under Sunium's lofty plain, that I might accost the sacred Athens<sup>i</sup>!

TEU. Truly I hurried back, having seen the commander Agamemnon hastening hither to us: and he evidently is about to let loose his evil tongue on me.

#### AGAMEMNON.

They tell me thou darest vaunt against us thy fierce invectives thus with impunity; thee, to thee, son of

<sup>f</sup> Still finer are the reflections of Henry the sixth upon the evils of war, as the causes which produce them are more dreadful, and truly warrant his exclaiming, "Woe upon woe, grief more than common grief!"

<sup>g</sup> Similar to this is the complaint of the herald in the Agamemnon of Æschylus.

<sup>h</sup> This passage bears a striking resemblance to a verse in the ninety-first Psalm.

<sup>i</sup> It was probably from these lines that lord Byron took the hint for the last stanza of his ode to the Greek isles:—

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,  
Where nothing, save the waves and I,  
May hear our mutual murmurs weep,—  
There, swan-like, let me sing and die.



the captured slave, I speak. Truly hadst thou been born of a noble mother, thou wouldst have boasted loftily, and walked on tiptoe, when, thyself a nothing<sup>k</sup>, for one that is nothing thou hast stood up against us. On oath too hast thou affirmed that we have come neither generals nor admirals of the Greeks or of thee; no, as thou sayest, [i. e. by thy account,] Ajax sailed his own commander. Are not these great insults to hear from slaves? In behalf of what manner of man hast thou clamoured thus haughtily? whither having marched, where made his stand, where I did not? Have then the Greeks no men save him? Of bitter consequence methinks was the contest I proclaimed of late to the Greeks for Achilles' arms, if everywhere I am to be made out a villain by Teucer; and if it will never content you, not even when worsted, to acquiesce in what the majority of your judges willed, but ye will constantly either assail us somewhere with reproaches, or harass us with covert treason, you the vanquished party. Yet out of ways like these there never could arise the establishment of any law, if we are to thrust out those who prevail justly, and bring the hindmost to the foremost rank: no, all this must we check. For 'tis not the man of ample size, nor of muscular frame that has the surest footing<sup>l</sup>; no, the men of good coun-

<sup>k</sup> Shamest thou not, knowing whence thou art extraught,  
To let thy tongue detect thy base-born heart?

Third Part of Henry VI. Act 2. Sc. 2.

<sup>l</sup> Ulysses, in Shakespeare, thus remarks on the false pride of Ajax and Achilles:—

So that the ram, that batters down the wall,  
For the great swing and rudeness of his poise,

sel ev'ry where prevail. And the large-sided ox goes straight along the road guided by a whip, though small. And on thee I behold this medicine quickly stealing, unless thou get thee some understanding, thou who for a man now no more, but already a shadow, art confident in insolence and in tongue unbridled. Wilt thou never be humble? wilt thou not, having learnt what by birth thou art<sup>m</sup>, bring hither some one else of gentle blood, who in thy stead shall speak to us thy words? for I can no longer understand while thou speakest, since I am not acquainted with the barbarians' tongue<sup>n</sup>.

CH. O that ye had both of you the sense to be temperate, for than this I have nothing better to advise you.

TEU. Alas! how speedily does all grateful memory of the dead fade away among mankind, and is found to have deserted him; if at least this man no longer, not even in trifling matters, Ajax, remembers thee, for

They place before the hand that made the engine,  
Or those that with the fineness of their souls,  
By reason guide his execution.

Troilus and Cressida, Act 1. Sc. 3.

<sup>m</sup> Satis contumeliose hæc ab Agamemnone proferuntur. Servi enim, qualem Teucrum traducit, non poterant Athenis in concione causam dicere. Conf. Ter. Phorm. 2. l. 62. Wesseling.

<sup>n</sup> Agamemnon sneers at Teucer for his descent from a foreign mother; wherein Sophocles appears rather to have consulted the manners and prejudices of his own age than that which he is describing. Not unlike this taunt is Hotspur's observation to Glendower:—

Who shall say me nay?

GLEN. Why, that will I.

HOT. Let me not understand you then,  
Speak it in Welsh.

First Part of Henry IV. Act 3. Sc. 1.

whom thou many a time didst toil with the spear, exposing thy life! But all this is now past and gone, thrown by in scorn. O thou that hast just uttered words many and profitless, rememberest thou no longer aught, when Ajax here once came and alone delivered you, pent up within your barriers<sup>o</sup>, already as nothing in the rout of battle; when fire was blazing around the ships, even then on the topmost benches of the seamen; and Hector, past the trenches, was leaping high upon the naval hulks! Who repelled all this? Was it not he that did it?—he, who, thou sayest, nowhere even set foot to foot? What! were not these justly his deeds in your behalf? And when again he singly, against Hector single-handed, by lot and not by command selected, went forth to cope with him; having deposited in the midst no clod of clammy earth<sup>p</sup>, his skulking lot, but one that was sure the first to bound with light spring from the crested helmet? He it was performed these deeds; and with him at his side, I, the slave, the offspring of a barbaric mother. Wretch! whither looking, canst thou prate of this? Knowest thou not that the father that begot thy father, Pelops of old, was a Phrygian barbarian; and Atreus, who in turn begat thee, was the most impious of men, who set before his brother a repast of his own children? And thou thyself wert born of a Cretan mother<sup>q</sup>, with whom the father

<sup>o</sup> See Homer, Il. 12, for the account of Ajax' repulse of Hector; and in the 14th book we find a disgraceful flight by night proposed by Agamemnon, but objected to by Ulysses.

<sup>p</sup> This is an anachronism, and alludes to the deceit practised by Cresphontes in furtherance of his gaining Messenia to his share in the division of Peloponnesus by the Heraclidæ. Apollod. Q. 8. Pausan. IV. 3.

<sup>q</sup> The term "Cretan," from the days of Plato (vid. Schol. ad Aristoph.

that begot her having taken a strange seducer, cast her away a prey to dumb fishes. And dost thou, being such, reproach with their family such as I am? I that am by birth the son of Telamon, who having gained the first prize of valour in the host, takes as the partner of his bed my mother, a princess by birth, child of Laomedon. Her, a selected present, the son of Alcmena gave him. And can I, thus the most excellent offspring of two the most excelling, disgrace my kindred by blood, whom, prostrate in woes like these, thou spurnest forth unburied, nor blushed for thy words? Be well assured then of this, that if ye shall cast forth any whither this body, ye shall with it cast out us three<sup>r</sup> lying at its side; since it is for my honour, labouring in Ajax' behalf, to die gloriously, rather than for thy wife's sake, or, I tell thee, thy brother's. Then look not to my situation only, but to thine own; since if thou shalt do me aught of harm, thou wilt one day wish thou hadst been a coward rather than bold against me.

CH. Prince Ulysses, know thou hast come in season, if thou art here not to embroil, but to join in loosing [the quarrel.]

Ανν. τὸν μαινόμενον, τὸν Κρήτα, τὸν μόγις Ἀττικόν.) to those of St. Paul, appears to have been a term of more than common reproach. Lycophron calls Menelaus a Half-Cretan, from his mother Aerope, whom her father having detected in an intrigue with a domestic, gave to Nauplius, with injunctions to throw her overboard out at sea; but he disobeyed the mandate, and betrothed her to Plisthenes son of Atreus. For Agamemnon and Menelaus are said to have been the grandchildren of Atreus, and not, as commonly supposed, his sons, although considered and treated as such by him.

<sup>r</sup> Himself, Tecmessa, and Eurysaces; for what the scholiast says of the words being a threat, and having reference to the Atridæ, is too farfetched; nor were the latter fallen down by Ajax' side, which he had instructed Eurysaces to do.

UL. What is it, friends? for from afar I heard the clamour of the Atridæ over this valiant corpse.

AG. Yes; for are we not hearing the most opprobrious words, king Ulysses, from this fellow here, even now?

UL. Of what sort? for I can grant indulgence to the man who hears bad words, with ill words to match them.

AG. He hath heard his shame, for shamefully he treated me.

UL. Why, what hath he done to thee, that thou hast injury?

AG. He denies that he will leave this dead body destitute of burial, but will inter it in spite of me.

✓ UL. Is it then allowed a friend, having spoken the truth, to be no less thy friend than before<sup>s</sup>?

AG. Say on;—else were I not in my right mind; since I account thee the greatest friend of the Greeks.

UL. Listen now. By the gods I implore, have not the heart thus pitilessly to cast out unburied this Ajax, and let not violence by any means prevail on thee so far to hate him as to trample on justice. For to me also he once was of all the army the bitterest foe, from the time I became master of Achilles' arms; and yet, though such he was to me, I would not so far dishonour him as not to say that he, and no other, was the bravest of all the Greeks I have looked on, as many of us as came to Troy, except Achilles; and therefore he may not, in justice at least, be disgraced by thee. For thou wouldst not injure him at all, but the laws of the

<sup>s</sup> Literally, "to pull together with thee."

✓ gods: nor is it just to wrong the brave man, if he be dead, although thou chance to hate him.

AG. Dost thou, Ulysses, thus in behalf of this man contend with me?

UL. I do. I hated him, whilst to hate was honourable.

AG. What, and oughtest thou not also to insult him dead?

UL. Joy not, son of Atreus, over vantages not honourable.

AG. Look thou, for a despot to be religious is no easy matter<sup>t</sup>.

UL. But it is to pay respect to friends who advise well.

AG. The virtuous man should obey those in office.

UL. Have done<sup>u</sup>. Thou conquerest, believe me, in yielding to thy friends.

AG. Remember to what kind of man thou grantest this favour.

<sup>t</sup> "The poet seems to have inserted this sentiment with a view rather to the gratification of his audience than to the consistency of the character." Hermann—who takes *εὔσεβειν* apparently as transitive, against the opinion of Valcknaer and others. There seems no reason to suppose that Sophocles alluded to Cleon here. With better reason apparently Hermann thinks that demagogue glanced at in lines 1338 and 1340, for his conduct towards the Lesbians, etc.

<sup>u</sup> The word *παῦσαι* here offends some of the commentators as indicative of too little respect on the part of Ulysses to his commander. Hence Markland would read *Πάσαις*, *Omnibus suffragiis*, and Musgrave *Πλεύσει κρᾶτιστον*, *optime navigabis*; but these emendations are by no means requisite. V. *Æd. Tyr.* 630. *Eur. And.* 692. This sentiment is explained by Thucydides, L. 4. c. 20. "For to those who are easily induced to make concessions men are naturally inclined to yield in their turn, and that with pleasure."

UL. This man was mine enemy, yet sometime noble.

AG. What canst thou possibly mean to do? Dost thou thus respect the corpse of a foe?

UL. Yes; for his valour far transcends my hatred.

AG. Yet men like these are in the world's eye fickle dotards.

UL. Nay, surely there are many now friends, but afterwards enemies.

AG. Dost thou then approve of making such as these thy friends?

UL. I am not wont to approve of an obdurate spirit.

AG. This day wilt thou demonstrate us to be cowards.

UL. Nay, rather to all the Greeks as men of justice.

AG. Dost thou then desire me to suffer them bury the corpse?

UL. I do; for I myself also shall come to this.\*

AG. How every man labours all things suitably to himself<sup>x</sup>!

UL. Yes; for for whom is it more reasonable I should labour than for myself?

AG. Shall not this then be called thy act, not mine?

UL. As thou shalt do it, shalt thou everywhere be esteemed meritorious.

AG. Nay then, be well assured of this at least, that I would bestow on thee a greater boon than this; but that man, whether here or there, will still be by me

\* Lobeck considers this as ironical in Agamemnon, who would insinuate that the present magnanimity of Ulysses was inconsistent with his character.

most hated: but it is allowed thee to act as is requisite.

CH. Whoever, Ulysses, denies that thou art naturally wise of counsel, being such as thou art, is a fool.

UL. However to Teucer I declare that from this time forth I am as much his friend as ere now I was his foe<sup>y</sup>; and I wish to help bury this dead body here, to share the labour, and omit nothing of all that it is man's duty to care for in honour of the noblest of mankind.

TEU. Most excellent Ulysses! 'tis mine to give thee all manner of commendation in words, and thou hast much belied my expectation; for being of Greeks the man most hostile to this my brother, thou alone hast stood by him with thy exertions, nor hast had the heart here alive greatly to insult him dead, as that our outrageous general coming, himself and his brother also were desirous to have cast him out and insulted without sepulture. Wherefore may the sire that rules this Olympus, and mindful Erinnys, and Justice accomplishing her end, bring the wretches to a wretched doom, even as they were desirous unworthily and in contemptuous sort to cast out Ajax. But, O seed of Laertes, thine aged sire, I dread to allow of thy having a hand in this funeral, lest this I do displeasing to the dead<sup>z</sup>; but in all else act with me; and if thou wilt that

<sup>y</sup> Thus Aufidius over the dead body of Coriolanus, whom he had slain:

My rage is gone,

And I am struck with sorrow.—Take him up,—

Help three of the chiefest soldiers; I'll be one.

Coriol. Act 4. Sc. 5.

<sup>z</sup> The ancients were very scrupulous in their respect to the manes of the dead. Hence Philostratus, speaking of these very events, has the following



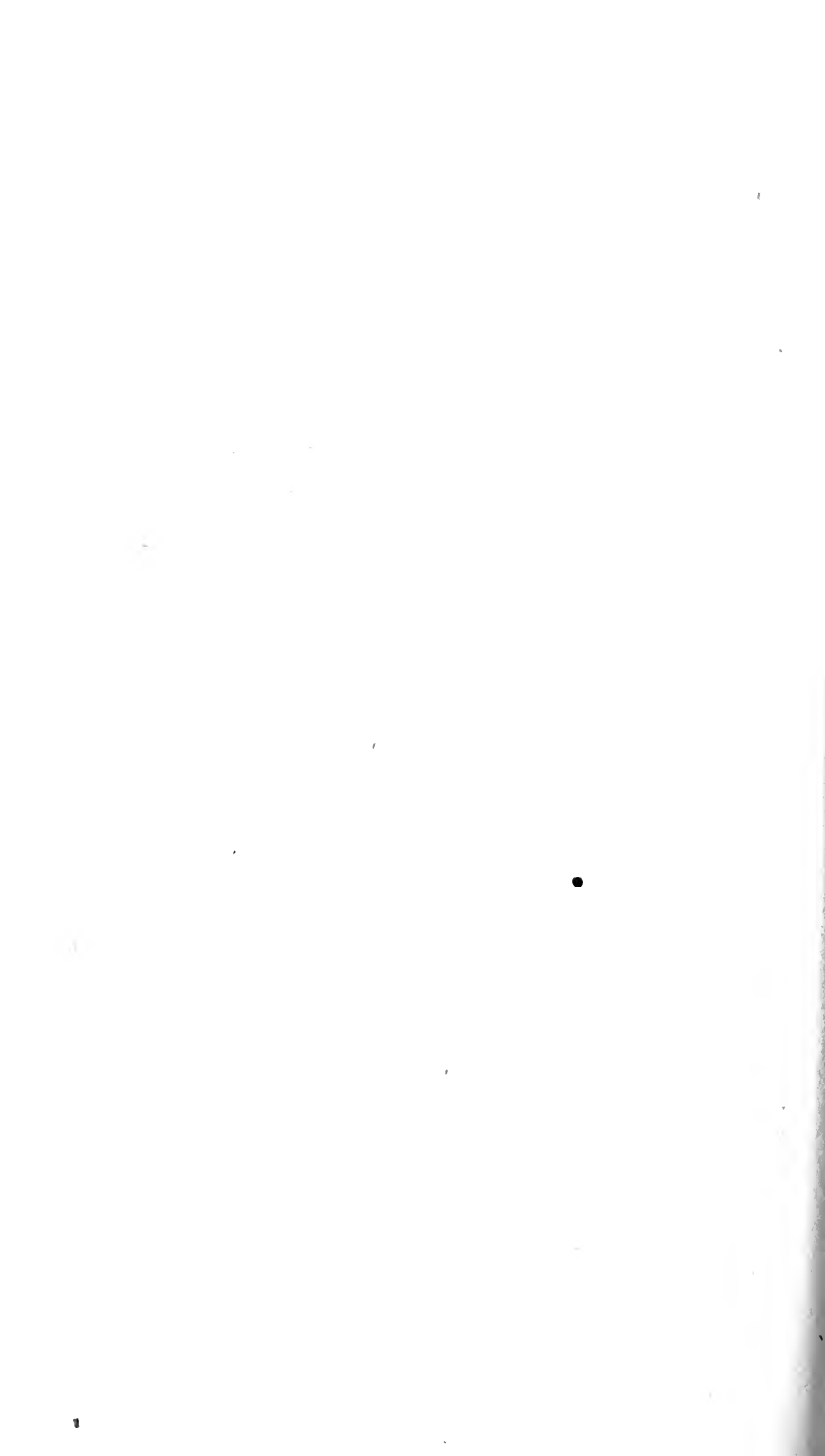
any one of the army attend him forth, I shall not feel hurt at it. But for all the rest myself will take order; and be thou assured that in my esteem thou art a worthy man.

UL. Nay, I could indeed have wished it; but if it be not pleasing to thee that I should do this, I will be gone, acquiescing in thy views.

TEU. Enough; for already hath much time elapsed: but do some of you speed with your hands the hollow grave, and others set on the fire the high-standing tripod, of use for the holy ablutions; and let one troop of men bring forth from the tent his mailed garniture. But do thou, child, with affection grasping thy father as well as thou hast strength to, ease this his side with me; for yet do the warm gashes exhale a black 'gore. But come every one that says he is here as a friend, let him hurry, let him go, toiling for this hero, in all things perfect, and for none among mankind more excellent than Ajax. I speak of him while he lived.

CH. How many things is it man's by seeing to know! but ere he have seen, there is no prophet of the future, as to what it will bring to pass.

passage: "He (Ulysses) having brought the armour of Achilles to Ajax when laid out for interment, and having burst into tears, 'There, be thou buried,' said he, 'in the arms thou didst love so well; and be thine the victory in them, nor let thy spirit feel aught of resentment.' Whereupon, the Greeks applauding Ulysses, Teucer joined in their praises of him, but declined the gift of the armour, on the plea that what caused his death was unfit to grace his burial." Heroicc. C. II. 3.



# PHILOCTETES.

**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.**

**ULYSSES.**

**NEOPTOLEMUS.**

**CHORUS.**

**PHILOCTETES.**

**SPY AS A MERCHANT.**

**HERCULES.**

## PHILOCTETES.

ULYSSES.

**THIS** is the shore of the wave-encircled land of Lemnos, untrodden by man, and uninhabited, where, O thou reared from a sire the mightiest of Greeks, Neoptolemus, thou son of Achilles, I once set on shore, having been appointed to execute this by the princes, the son of Poias the Melian<sup>a</sup>, running at the foot with a corrosive disease, when it was not possible for us to set our hand either to libation<sup>b</sup> or sacrifice unmolested, but continually did he fill the whole camp with wild and ill-omened cries, shrieking and groaning. Yet what need is there to speak of this? For 'tis no season for length of words to us, lest he learn that I am come,

<sup>a</sup> Philoctetes is said by some to have accompanied the Argonautic expedition, and was certainly the armour-bearer and particular friend of Hercules; which must either bring the dates of the Argonautic voyage and Trojan war nearer each other than they are generally placed, or present him a very aged candidate for the hand of Helen.

<sup>b</sup> Distinctly mentioned, because libations were made on all the petty affairs of life, at the reception of a stranger, or on going to bed; sacrifices, on account of their expence, only on great occasions.

and I overthrow our whole artifice, by which I expect I presently shall ensnare him. But now it is thy business to serve me in the rest, and to spy out where hereabouts is the cavern of double mouth, of such a nature as that there in cold weather is at hand a double place to sit in the sun, and in summer the breeze wafts slumber through the vault hollowed throughout. But a little way below, on the left, thou mightest haply see a pure fountain, if it yet be preserved. Which approaching silently, signify to me whether yet he keeps to this very same spot, or whether he happens to be elsewhere, that thou mayest hear, and I instruct thee in, the residue of my counsels, and the cause in common may proceed from both.

## NEOPTOLEMUS.

Prince Ulysses, thou speakest of no distant labour, since I fancy I perceive a cavern, such as thou hast mentioned.

UL. Above or below? for I do not discern it.

NE. This is from above, and there is at least no print of a footstep.

UL. See, whether he chance to be laid down to sleep.

NE. I see a dwelling place empty and untenanted by man.

UL. Is there not some home-made<sup>c</sup> sustenance within?

NE. At any rate there are trodden leaves, as if for some inmate.

<sup>c</sup> Οἰκόποιος must here be taken passively, *cibus domi paratus*, as δολόποιος ἀνάγκη in the Trachiniæ, *dolor fraude comparatus*.

UL. But is all else deserted, and nothing beneath the roof?

NE. There is a drinking-vessel all of wood, the workmanship of some sorry craftsman<sup>d</sup>, and together with it this firewood<sup>e</sup>.

UL. This store that thou tellest me of is his.

NE. Alas, alas ! Here are besides these rags drying, full of some offensive matter from a sore.

UL. The man evidently is an inhabitant of these parts, and is somewhere not far off. For how should a lame man, diseased with a malady of old standing, go out to any distance? No, but either for food hath he gone forth on his way<sup>f</sup>, or if he knows of some pain-assuaging plant any where. Send, therefore, this man here by espial, that he may not light on me unobserved, since he had rather lay hands on me than all the other Greeks.

NE. Nay, he is both on his way thither, and the path shall be watched ; but do thou, if thou desirest aught, instruct me by thy next words.

UL. Son of Achilles, it becomes thee to be of high resolve in the work for which thou hast come, not merely in thy person, but if thou shouldst hear aught new, whereof thou hast not heard before, to lend aid therein, since thou art here an assistant.

<sup>d</sup> It appears then that Ulysses had at least one point of superiority over the unfortunate man on whom he had exercised such rigour, that of being a better carpenter. See *Odyss.* XXIII.

<sup>e</sup> The Greek word may mean either wood or flint. Musgrave, on the authority of Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* V. 4, is of opinion that it should be interpreted as the former. Barby prefers the latter, and quotes v. 296.

<sup>f</sup> *Νόστρον* here appears forced. See Brunck's note.

NE. What then dost thou bid me do?

UL. It needs thou [consider] how speaking thou shalt by thy words cajole the mind of Philoctetes. When he asks thee who and whence thou art, say, "the son of Achilles," (this must not be concealed,) "and that thou art sailing homewards, having abandoned the naval armament of the Greeks, being with deep hatred their foe, for that having with supplications fetched thee to come from thy home, possessing these only means of taking Troy, they thought thee not worthy of Achilles' arms, to give them thee when arrived and of right demanding them; but on the contrary transferred them to Ulysses<sup>g</sup>,"——venting whatever abuse, the lowest of the low<sup>h</sup>, thou wilt against me. For in nothing of all this wilt thou pain me; but if thou wilt not do this, thou wilt strike sorrow into all the Greeks. For if the bow and arrows of this man be not procured, it is not thine to sack the Dardan<sup>i</sup> plain. But that I have not and thou hast sure and safe communion with this man, learn of me. Thou hast sailed, bound by oath to none, nor on compulsion<sup>k</sup>, nor on the first expedition:

<sup>g</sup> The contest concerning the arms of Achilles was solely between Ajax and Ulysses; we have no account that Neoptolemus laid claim to them. As Philoctetes, however, had been absent during the whole affair, Ulysses was at liberty to substitute Neoptolemus in the room of Ajax, especially as his being the son of Achilles naturally justified his pretensions to the arms of his father. The fiction was therefore probable. Franklin.

<sup>h</sup> Gloster, in his instructions to Buckingham to pave the way for his assumption of the crown, goes even farther than this, and commissions him to charge his (Gloster's) own mother with adultery. Rich. III. Act 3. Sc. 5.

<sup>i</sup> Dardanus was son to Jupiter by Electra, and the founder of the Trojan race.

<sup>k</sup> Such was Echeolus, Hom. Il. XXIII. 293.



I can deny none of these. So that, if while master of his weapons he shall discover me, I am undone, and shall involve thee in my ruin by being with thee. But this very point must be cunningly devised, that thou mayest be by stealth the possessor of the resistless arms. I am aware indeed that thou art not naturally inclined to utter such words, nor to frame evil. But [thou must] for, mark me, delightful to gain is the possession of victory. Dare it<sup>1</sup>, but afterwards again will we shew ourselves upright. Now however for the brief portion of a day resign thyself to me unto shamelessness, and then for after time be called the most religious of all men.

NE. Son of Laertes, the words which I grieve to hear, them I also abhor to practise. For my nature is to do nothing with evil treachery, neither mine own, nor, as they say, my father's that begot me. But I am ready to carry off the man by violence, and not by craft; for he will not with but one foot overpower so many as we are by force. Yet still, having been sent as thy coadjutor, I dread being called thy betrayer: but, O prince, I had rather fail acting nobly, than basely prevail.

UL. Son of a noble father, I too formerly in youth

Then Menelaus his Podargus brings,  
And the famed courser of the king of kings,  
Whom rich Echepolus, (more rich than brave,)  
• To 'scape the war, to Agamemnon gave.

Pope.

<sup>1</sup> It is not to be wondered at that Ulysses should recommend this conduct to Neoptolemus, since at v. 1049, we find him glorying in it as his own system of action.

possessed a slow tongue and active hand<sup>m</sup>; but now having gone forth to the test, I see that to mankind the tongue and not the act, bears rule in every thing.

NE. What else then hast thou bid me, but to utter falsehood?

UL. I bid thee seize Philoctetes by stratagem.

NE. But what needs there take him by stratagem rather than persuasion?

UL. Think not he will be persuaded: but by force thou couldst not take him.

NE. Hath he then confidence in his strength so formidable?

UL. He hath unerring arrows, harbingers of death.

NE. What then, dare not one even approach him?

UL. No, at least if he entrap him not by craft, as I advise.

NE. And dost thou not then hold it base to utter falsehoods?

UL. No, at least if the lie brings safety.

NE. With what face then shall one dare to say all this?

UL. When thou doest aught for advantage, it suits not to recoil.

NE. But what advantage to me is his going to Troy?

UL. These archer-weapons alone will take Troy.

NE. What, am not I then the destined destroyer, as ye declared?

<sup>m</sup> Such is Shakespeare's description of Troilus:—

The youngest son of Priam, a true knight,  
Not yet mature, yet matchless: firm of word:  
Speaking in deeds, but deedless in his tongue.

Troilus and Cressida, Act 4. Sc. 5.

UL. Neither couldst thou be without them, nor they without thee.

NE. Then must they be our prize, if indeed it be so.

UL. Truly, if thou do this, thou wilt get thyself two rewards.

NE. Of what sort? for having learnt I would not refuse the doing it.

UL. Thou wouldst be called at once wise and good.

NE. Be it so, I will do it, having laid aside all shame.

UL. Dost thou then remember all that I have advised thee?

NE. Be assured I do, now that I have once consented<sup>n</sup>.

UL. Do thou then abiding here receive him; but I will be gone, lest being present I be discovered, and I will send the spy<sup>o</sup> back again to the ship. And hither again, if ye seem to me to loiter at all in time, I will send out this same man, having tricked him out in appearance after the manner of a ship's master, that ignorance may befall [i. e. of his person to Philoctetes] from whom, my son, speaking cunningly<sup>p</sup>, gather thou of his words from time to time whatever may profit us. But I will go to the vessel, committing all this to thee;

<sup>n</sup> Hermann praises here the art of the poet, in making Neoptolemus shrink in indignation with himself from again hearing advice of the baseness of which he is conscious.

<sup>o</sup> Not the person mentioned v. 45, but a servant whom Ulysses had with him. Herm.

<sup>p</sup> Πουτῖλος, *variè, versutè*. Thus Livy has "*variè agere*;" and in Sallust the mind of Catiline is called "*varius*." Cat. c. 5.

and may attendant Mercury, patron of deceit<sup>a</sup>, be our guide, and Minerva<sup>r</sup> the victorious of cities, who ever protects me.

## CHORUS.

What, what, my prince, must I, in a strange land a stranger, hide, or what say to the suspicious man? tell me. For contrivance surpasses other contrivance<sup>s</sup>, as does judgment, in him by whomsoever the divine sceptre of Jove is swayed. And to thee, my son, this full power from olden time hath come: wherefore declare to me<sup>t</sup> in what it is needful for me to do thee service.

NE. Now, for haply thou desirest to look on the spot in a region so remote, wherein he lies, look boldly; but when the dread wayfarer shall come, emerging from these his haunts<sup>u</sup>, do thou, ever at my beck<sup>x</sup>, endeavour to be of present service.

<sup>a</sup> Mercury had many appellations of this kind, which are humorously mentioned towards the close of the *Plutus* of Aristophanes.

<sup>r</sup> Minerva is said to have been worshipped in her temple on the *Acropolis* under this name. Her second title was derived from her being the foundress of Athens, and appears therefore in the mouth of the speaker somewhat misplaced. Her protection of Ulysses is well known: v. *Ajax*, L. 1. II. X. 279.

<sup>s</sup> σοφία δ' ἂν σοφίαν  
παραμείψεν ἄνηρ.

Æd. Tyr. v. 503.

<sup>t</sup> Τό μοι ἐννεπε, pro διὰ τοῦτο ellipticè. Vid. *Hom.* II. III. v. 176. VII. v. 239. XVII. v. 404. Barby.

<sup>u</sup> To the translation as now given, Hermann considers it no objection that the Chorus subsequently asks whether Philoctetes be in or out of doors, inasmuch as it was natural for them in such a place to suspect him of lurking somewhere near.

<sup>x</sup> Hermann thinks πρὸς χεῖρα to be the same with the Latin phrase *ad*

CH. Thou speakest, O king, of a care by me long since cared for, to watch thine eye especially for thy occasion. But now tell me in what kind of dwelling he is the settled inhabitant, and what place he tenants; for this it were not inopportune for me to learn, lest he having approached from any quarter escape my notice. What spot, or what abode is his? What path takes he? within his dwelling, or without<sup>y</sup>?

NE. This habitation with double entrance of the rocky lair that thou seest, is his.

CH. And where is the wretched man himself away from it?

NE. It is clear to me at least that in want of food he is furrowing his tread<sup>z</sup> somewhere near; for report says that he exercises this mode of sustenance, laboriously<sup>a</sup>, himself o'erwhelmed with toil, striking his quarry with winged arrows, nor does he procure him any healer of his woes.

CH. I truly pity him, for that he, not having even any comrade aspect [to behold] of any one among mankind interested for him unhappy, ever solitary, is dis-tempered with a fierce disease, and helplessly languishes<sup>b</sup> in every want that arises to him. How, how

*manum*, i. e. *ut statim uti te possim*; and renders *φαιδρωπὸν ποτὶ χεῖρα* from the Agamemnon, *qui præsto est hilari vultu ad omnia officia*; a version few admirers of Æschylus will be inclined to adopt.

<sup>y</sup> These reiterated questions well denote the dread of the Chorus, after they have been already informed by their lord himself, (v. 31.) that Philoctetes is not within.

<sup>z</sup> *ὀγμύνειν στίβον* est viam deinceps prosequi, similitudine a metentibus repetita. Herm.

<sup>a</sup> *στυγερὸν στυγερώς*. Herm.

<sup>b</sup> Ἀλύει, ἀδημονεῖ, Schol. which latter word is used in the New Testament to express the vehemence of our Saviour's agony.

does the hapless man ever support it? O toiling hands of mortals! O luckless races of men, to whom destiny is untoward! He perchance being inferior to none, though of the noblest houses, destitute of all in life, lies alone apart from others, with the dappled or the shaggy beasts, pitiable both in pain and hunger, possessed of incurable afflictions: while mournful Echo with her babbling tongue rising from afar hears and answers to his bitter shrieks<sup>c</sup>.

NE. None of these things is to me surprising, for they are heaven-sent, if at least I have aught of judgment. And those sufferings have descended on him from Chryse<sup>d</sup> of the savage heart; and all that he now labours under unsupported by anxious friends cannot but be by the providence of the gods, that he should not aim the deities' invincible weapons<sup>e</sup> against Troy.

<sup>c</sup> The mockery of Echo is finely imagined here, and may almost bear a comparison with the sublime passage from an eastern tale which Lord Byron has quoted in his notes to the *Bride of Abydos*, n. 42. The order of the words, according to Hermann, is, ἂν δ' ἀθυρόστομος ἀχὼ ὑπὸ πικρᾶς οἰμωγᾶς ὀχεῖται τηλεφανῆς, i. e. τηλόσε, ἐκεῖ φαινόμενη.

<sup>d</sup> There are two accounts of the manner in which Philoctetes became thus diseased. The one which Sophocles appears to have followed states, that he landed on an island near Lemnos, called Chryse, whereon he had been directed to sacrifice to Minerva in behalf of the Greeks, and was bitten by a serpent that guarded the spot. The other attributes his misfortune to the vengeance of heaven, for his having disclosed, by stamping with his foot, the place where Hercules' remains had been interred, which was soon followed by the fall of one of his patron's arrows on the guilty member.

They who have made mention of Minerva Chrysa in this matter, have not explained why a goddess who was desirous of the taking of Troy, should throw an obstacle in the way of that catastrophe by the mischance of Philoctetes. Herm.

<sup>e</sup> Hercules received his bow and arrows from Apollo.

ere the time should elapse, at which 'tis said by these she must be overcome.

CH. Be silent, my son.

NE. What's this?

CH. A noise arose familiar to a man, as pained.

NE. Was it somewhere hereabouts, or there? The voice of some one strikes, aye, strikes upon me distinctly, one crawling on his path with much ado, nor does the deep utterance of a worn-out spirit from afar escape me, for over-loudly it resounds.

CH. Take, my son——

NE. Tell me what.

CH. ——thought anew. The man is not out of his abode, but in the place, not trolling the music of the reed-pipe, as a rural shepherd, but either somewhere stumbling, for violent pain he shrieks his far-echoing cry, or descrying our vessel's inhospitable station; for dreadful is his outcry.

#### PHILOCTETES.

O strangers, who can ye be that with mariner's oar have put into this land, neither good of harbourage nor inhabited<sup>f</sup>? From what possible country or race should I be right in saying you were? For the array of your dress is that of Greece, my best-beloved: but I would hear your voice: and do not recoiling with

<sup>f</sup> It must not be supposed, from these and similar expressions throughout the play, that Lemnos was entirely uninhabited, since the descendants of the Argonauts dwelt there; and Homer (Od. VIII. 283.) calls the island *ἐκκρίμενον προλιέθρον*; but only those parts of it which Philoctetes inhabited, whose range must necessarily, from his lameness, have been very confined.

horror be astounded at me thus brutalized, but in pity to an unhappy man, lonely, thus forlorn, friendless, and in pain, speak to me, if indeed ye come as friends. But answer in your turn<sup>g</sup>, for it is not just that in this at least either you should be disappointed in me, or I in you.

NE. But, stranger, know this first, that we are Greeks, for this thou wouldst learn.

PH. O accents most dear! Ah! to think that I should hear the voice of such a man after so long a time! What need, my son, put thee in, what brought thee hither? What impulse? which of the winds, most friendly? Tell me all this, that I may know who thou art.

NE. I am by birth from the wave-girt Scyros<sup>h</sup>: and I am sailing homewards: and am called the son of Achilles, Neoptolemus. Now thou knowest the whole.

PH. O son of a sire most dear, of a land beloved, thou nursling of the aged Lycomedes, with what armament hast thou touched at this land? whence voyaging?

NE. From Ilion then now at least, mark me, I steer my course.

<sup>g</sup> The silence of Neoptolemus in this place is caused by his pity, and the necessity of recovering himself, in order to play his part in the stratagem of Ulysses. Hermann.

<sup>h</sup> Scyros is an island of the Ægean, about thirty miles north of Eubœa, and belonged originally to the Pelasgians and Carians: it was thither that Thetis sent Achilles, to prevent his joining the armament to Troy, and there that hero became father of Neoptolemus by Deidamia, daughter of Lycomedes, the king of the island. Neoptolemus consequently was educated to consider Scyros as his home, although Pthiotis was his father's inheritance.



PH. How sayest thou? For surely thou wert not our fellow sailor in the beginning of our voyage to Troy.

NE. How, didst thou also take part in that labour?

PH. My son, knowest thou not me, on whom thou lookest?

NE. Why how should I know thee, whom I have never seen before?

PH. What? hast thou never heard my name even, nor any rumour of my miseries, whereby I was ruined?

NE. Be assured I know nothing of the things of which thou questionest me.

PH. O fully wretched that I am, and hateful to the gods, of whom thus situated not even a report has pervaded my home, nor anywhere else in the land of Greece; but they that cast me impiously away, laugh and keep silence, while my disease is ever virulent and increases more and more. My child, thou son of Achilles thy father, I am he whom thou perhaps hearest of as lord of the arms of Hercules, Philoctetes the son of Poias; whom the two generals and the Cephallenians' king have thus basely cast out destitute<sup>1</sup>, wasting away by a cruel disease, having been stricken by the savage impressure of the deadly serpent, wherewith they, my son, having put me on shore here abandoned, went off, at the time when from Ocean Chryse they touched here with their naval expedition. Then eagerly,

<sup>1</sup> Ulysses followed through the wat'ry road,  
A chief in wisdom equal to a god,  
With those whom Cephallenia's isle inclosed,  
Or till their fields along the coast opposed.

Pope's Il. B. II. 766.

when they saw me after much tossing on the main sleeping upon the shore within an o'erarched rock, they left me and departed, having deposited a few rags, as for a wretch like me, and also some scanty pittance of food<sup>k</sup>, such as O that they might have! Think, then, my son, with what an awakement I rose from sleep at that time, when they were gone, what tears I wept, what dreadful shrieks I uttered, beholding all the ships gone, commanding which I was sailing, and not a human being on the spot, nor one to assist me, nor to unite in easing my disease while I suffered with it. But looking on all, I found nought present but affliction, but of this, my son, large store. So in time my days passed on, and I was compelled alone to labour every thing for myself under this humble roof. My needful food this bow procured, striking down the fluttering doves; and then to whatsoever my nerve-strung arrow would pierce, I hapless was wont myself to crawl<sup>l</sup>, dragging after me my foot towards it. And if I wanted to procure me aught to drink, and when the frost o'erspread [the ground] as in winter, anywhere to break up some wood, this would I wretched creeping forth contrive. Then would there be at hand no fire, but rubbing flint on flint, hardly did I elicit the

<sup>k</sup> This was also the case when any one among the ancients was condemned to be buried alive, lest pollution should come upon the land, as we find in *Antigone*. The Romans preserved the custom in their treatment of the vestals convicted of unchastity. Hermann translates it, "such as they might happen to have."

<sup>l</sup> "Εἰλυόμεν, ab εἰλύω vel εἰλύμι, *volvo, verto*: hinc εἰλύομαι, *verto me*, i. e. *proficiscor*. Imprimis vero de difficulter et ægre incedentibus dicitur, quare Hesychius interpretatur per τετραποδίζειν, cf. v. 702, quem locum Hesychius forsitan respexit." Barby.

hidden light, which ever preserves me. For this covered cave inhabited with fire supplies me all but freedom from disease. Come, my son, now shalt thou learn the state of the island. To this no mariner willingly draws near, for there is no harbour, nor whither voyaging he may traffick for gain, or be hospitably received. Nor hither are the voyages of the prudent among men. Now haply some one hath against his will touched here, for many such cases might occur in the protracted time of man [i. e. of man's life.] These when they come, my son, compassionate me indeed in words, and sometimes in pity they have bestowed on me in addition some portion of food, or some raiment: but that one thing, when I shall mention it, wills none, to take me safe home. No, wretched I am perishing now this the tenth year, in hunger and in misery feeding my ravenous malady. Thus have the Atridæ and the great Ulysses, my son, treated me, to whom may the gods of heaven one day give themselves to suffer a requital of my wrongs<sup>m</sup>.

CH. Methinks I too, son of Poias, compassionate thee equally with the strangers that have arrived hither.

NE. Nay I too myself, a witness to thee in these thy words, know they are true, having met with the Atridæ and the mighty Ulysses to be bad men.

PH. What, hast thou also any charge against the all-

<sup>m</sup> Sophocles does not mention whether or no Philoctetes became reconciled to the Atridæ and Ulysses; but this his curse was amply fulfilled on Agamemnon, who was murdered by his wife; on Menelaus, who was carried by a storm to Egypt, and was eight years in returning to Sparta; and on Ulysses, whose wanderings and distresses are well known.

accursed Atridæ, so as being wronged to feel rage at them?

NE. Be it mine with my hand to glut that rage one day, that both Mycenæ and Sparta may know that Seyros too is the mother of puissant men.

PH. Well done, my son; and for what hast thou come laying to their charge [the cause of] this thy fierce anger?

NE. Son of Poias, I will declare, yet hardly can I speak, the wrongs wherewith I was insulted by them on my arrival. For when Fate prevailed that Achilles should die——

PH. Ah me! tell me no further ere I shall have learnt this first, if the son of Peleus be dead.

NE. He is, conquered by no man, but stricken down by the arrows of a god, as they report, Apollo<sup>n</sup>.

PH. Nay then, noble was both the slayer and the slain°. But I am at a loss, my son, whether I shall first inquire into thy sufferings, or mourn his.

NE. I indeed think thine own grievances suffice thee at least, unhappy man, so that thou shouldst not bewail thy neighbours'.

PH. Thou hast said rightly. Wherefore tell me again and afresh thy matter wherein they have insulted thee.

<sup>n</sup> This is from Homer, who makes the dying Hector utter the following prophecy:—

Yet think a day will come, when fate's decree  
And angry gods shall wreak this wrong on thee:  
Phœbus and Paris shall avenge my fate,  
And stretch thee here, before this Scæan gate.

° See note on Ajax, v. 970.

NE. There came after me in a many-coloured vessel both the noble Ulysses and my father's governor<sup>p</sup>, asserting, whether true now, or false, that it could not be lawful, since my father had fallen, that any other but I should take Troy. This, O stranger, they stating thus, I delayed me no long time, so as not to sail speedily, most particularly indeed out of affection for the deceased<sup>q</sup>, that I might see him unburied, for I had never beheld him. The next however fair renown presented herself, if by my going I might take the castle of Troy. And now it was the second day of my voyage, and I with favouring oar was gaining the hateful Sigæum, when instantly on my landing, the whole army in a circle began to embrace me, swearing that they beheld alive again Achilles then no more<sup>r</sup>. There then was he lying. But I, the miserable, not long after that I had wept over him, having come to my friends the Atridæ, as was reasonable, demanded of them the arms of my father, and all else that was his. But they spake, ah

<sup>p</sup> Phoenix, son of Amyntor king of Argos, having by his mother's persuasion entered into an intrigue with a favourite mistress of his father, was detected, and, as some say, blinded by that monarch. He then quitted his country for the court of Peleus, who persuaded Chiron to restore him to sight, and conferred on him the sovereignty of the Dolopians. In gratitude for these favours he undertook the tuition of Achilles, and accompanied that hero to the Trojan war, at the close of which he returned with Pyrrhus, and died in Thrace. V. II. IX. 448.

<sup>q</sup> Hermann here recommends us to avoid a strict inquiry into dates, since if Achilles left the court of Lycomedes for Troy, Neoptolemus could be only ten years old.

<sup>r</sup> Livy has a similar passage, B. XXI. c. 4:—"Missus Annibal in Hispaniam primo statim adventu omnem exercitum in se convertit. Amilcarem viventem redditum sibi veteres milites credere, eundem vigorem in vultu, vimque in oculis, habitum oris, lineamentaue tueri."

me! most shameless words: "Son of Achilles, all else that was thy father's it is allowed thee to take; but of those arms another warrior now is master, the son of Laertes." And I in tears forthwith rise up to go in deep resentment, and indignant answer, "Villain! and have ye dared to give my armour to any in my stead, ere you learnt [my pleasure] of me? But Ulysses said, for he happened to be close by: "Yes, boy, in justice have they given me these, for I was present to save them and their master<sup>s</sup>." And I infuriated instantly began to assail them with every word of reproach, framing no ban imperfect, if he were to bereave me of mine arms. But he thus situated, even though he is not cholerick, wounded at what he heard from me, thus replied: "Thou wert not where we were, but absent where thou oughtest not to have been. And these arms, since thou speakest also thus bold in tongue, think not thou shalt ever sail hence to Scyros possessing." Having heard and been reviled with such taunts as these, I am sailing homeward, spoiled of mine own, by that vilest of a vile race, Ulysses. And I blame not him so much as those in power. For a city is all its leaders', and so is a whole combined host; but they among mankind that are dishonourable, become ini-

\* In unison with this, Ovid makes Ulysses thus express himself:—

Me miserum! quanto cogor meminisse dolore  
 Temporis illius, quo Graium murus Achilles  
 Procubuit! nec me lachrymæ luctusve timorve  
 Tardârunt, quin corpus humo sublime referrem;  
 His humeris, his, inquam, humeris ego corpus Achillis  
 Et simul arma tuli.

Metam. L. XIII. v. 280.

quitos by the precepts of their teachers. My tale has all been told : and may he that abhors the Atridæ be as much beloved by heaven as he is by me.

CH. O mountain Rhea, nurse of all, mother of Jove himself, who hauntest the ample Pactolus rich in gold, even there, O venerable parent, I prayed to thee, when on Neoptolemus the consummate insolence of Atreus' sons was venting itself, when they gave from him his father's arms, thou blessed goddess<sup>t</sup> on bull-rending lions seated, as a mark of supreme respect to the son of Laertes.

PH. Ye have sailed hither, (as also ye chime in with me,) strangers, possessed, it seems, of a watchword plain enough to me, so as to recognize these for the doings of the Atridæ and Ulysses. For I am quite sure that he would attempt with his tongue every evil word and villany, by which he purposes in the end to work nothing honest. But this to me at least is not at all a wonder, but it were so, if Ajax the greater were there to witness all this, and endured it.

NE. He was no longer alive, my friend ; for never while he lived at least had I thus been plundered.

PH. How sayest thou ? And is he too dead and gone ?

NE. Be aware that he is no longer in life.

<sup>t</sup> The Chorus appealed to Rhea on that occasion as chief deity of the country in which they then were, for that goddess was generally by the ancients considered the same with Cybele, and worshipped chiefly in Lydia (of which Pactolus is the principal stream) and Phrygia. She is usually represented as riding on a car drawn by the lions into which she had changed Hippomenes and Atalanta ; but Barby suggests that the present substitution of bulls may designate the change from savage to civilized life.

PH. Ah me unhappy! But not the son of Tydeus<sup>u</sup>, nor the bargain of Sisyphus to Laertes, they surely cannot be dead? For they should not live.

NE. No indeed. Be sure of that at least. No, they are flourishing finely at present in the Greek host.

PH. But what of him who is aged and yet stout, the friend of Philoctetes, Nestor the Pylian, is he yet alive? For he surely had checked their crimes by wise counsel.

NE. He indeed is now faring badly, since Antilochus, the only child he had<sup>x</sup>, is dead and lost to him.

PH. Ah me! tidings equally dire hast thou brought me of those two, of whose death I had least been willing to hear. Alas! alas! to what then must one look, when they are dead, and Ulysses yet remains even there, where in their room he ought to be spoken of as dead?

NE. An artful combatant is he; but 'tis not the artful designs, O Philoctetes, that are often thwarted<sup>y</sup>.

PH. Come, by the gods I ask, tell me where in that

<sup>u</sup> We do not find hitherto any mention of Diomed as having incurred the wrath of Philoctetes, but his known intimacy with Ulysses, and infamous conduct to Dolon, afford strong suspicions of his having joined in the wrong done to the son of Poias.

<sup>x</sup> Nestor had seven sons, two of whom accompanied him to the Trojan war. The epithet *μόνος*, here applied to Antilochus, is usually supposed to mean the survivor of these two. Antilochus was slain by Memnon the Æthiopian.

<sup>y</sup> Neoptolemus says that Ulysses does indeed craftily avoid the dangers of war, but that this additional evil is joined to that craft, that his dishonest purposes too often succeed, as in the affair of Achilles' arms. Hermann. Unless Neoptolemus were supposed to play Tubal's part towards Shylock, this is much more consistent than the common reading.



season was thy friend Patroclus, who was thy father's best-beloved?

NE. He too had fallen. But in few words I will instruct thee in this. War purposely carries off no wicked man, but ever the virtuous.

PH. To thine I add my testimony: and by this very same rule I will now question thee of a worthless being, yet shrewd of tongue and cunning, what is his condition now?

NE. Of what man dost thou ask this, save Ulysses?

PH. I spake not of him; but there was one Thersites<sup>z</sup>, who never would choose but once to speak what none could bear to hear: knowest thou if he chance to live?

NE. I saw him not, but heard he was yet in being<sup>a</sup>.

PH. He was likely: since never yet did aught of evil perish, but of that the gods take especial care: and somehow the treacherous and the wily they delight in respiting from Hades<sup>b</sup>, but the just and the

<sup>z</sup> Thersites only clamour'd in the throng,  
Loquacious, loud, and turbulent of tongue:  
Awed by no shame, by no respect controll'd,  
In scandal busy, in reproaches bold,  
With witty malice studious to defame;  
Scorn all his joy, and laughter all his aim.

Pope's II. II. 255.

<sup>a</sup> All other authors say that he fell by the hand of Achilles. The scholiast attributes his death to his having struck out Penthesilea's eye after that princess had fallen by the hand of Achilles. "*Prudenter Sophocles ea dicentem fecit Neoptolemum, quæ et a patre ejus ignobile facinus declinarent, et egregie declararent obscuritatem Thersitæ.*" Herm.

<sup>b</sup> Not unreasonably then in Philoctetes' opinion might Nestor, as in Shakespeare he does, say of Hector,

"Lo! Jupiter is yonder, dealing life."

upright they are ever dismissing. Where must we place this to account, wherein approve, when, lauding the acts of the gods, I have found the gods unjust?

NE. I, O son of an Ætæan<sup>c</sup> father, now henceforth from afar looking on both Ilium and the Atridæ will beware of them. Where the worse is of greater power than the better, and all that is good is on the wane, and the coward prevails, these men never will I hold dear. No, the rocky Scyros<sup>d</sup> hereafter shall content me, to pleasure myself at home. And now will I go to my vessel, and do thou, son of Poias, farewell, most well, and may the gods emancipate thee from thy disease, as thyself wishest. But let us begone, that whensoever heaven shall grant us to sail, even then we may weigh anchor.

PH. Are ye now bound to sail, my son?

NE. Yes, for occasion invites us to watch a time for sailing rather near the ship than out of her sight.

PH. Now by thy father and thy mother, my son, and by aught that is dear to thee, if aught there be, at home, I a suppliant implore thee, leave me not forlorn and lonely in these afflictions, such as thou seest, and as many as thou hast heard I live in; but account me an overplus of toil<sup>e</sup>. The annoyance, I well know, of

Since to this very Thersites, after he has given an account of himself perfectly accordant with what is said of him here, the Trojan warrior replies, "I do believe thee; live." There is however an allusion to Sisyphus.

<sup>c</sup> Æta, whereon Hercules burnt himself, is a mountainous range on the confines of Thessaly and Macedonia, extending from Pindus to Thermopylæ and the Malian territory, over which Poias reigned.

<sup>d</sup> Ἀρχὴ Σκυρία became a Greek proverb, furnishing much the same idea as a German duchy or principality does to us.

<sup>e</sup> See Brannck's note.

this freightage will be great, yet still put up with it. To the generous, mark me, both baseness is hateful, and virtue glorious. But to thee, having left this undone, the reproach is not creditable, and having performed it, my son, the noblest meed of fair renown, should I live to reach the Ætæan land. Come. The trouble, look you, is not that of one whole day. Resolve on it: take and cast me in where thou wilt, into the hold, the prow, the stern, wherever I am least likely to offend thy mates. Assent, by Jove Icesian himself, my son, be persuaded. I fall at thy knees before thee, though I wretched am infirm and lame. Nay, leave me not thus deserted, far from any trace of man; but either take and carry me safe to thine home, or to the abodes of Chalcodon in Eubœa<sup>f</sup>: and thence my voyage will not be a long one to Æta, and the rocky ridge of Trachis, and the fair-flowing Spercheius, that thou mayest present me to my dear father, of whom it is long that I have feared lest he be gone from me; since often did I send for him by those who came hither, conveying to him suppliant entreaties that he would himself embarking rescue me and carry me hence to my home. But either he is dead, or, I suppose, my emissaries, as is likely, making my case of slight account, hurried their voyage homewards. Now however, since I am come to thee as at once my convoy and my messenger, do thou save me, do thou pity me, beholding how every thing is doomed to man in trouble

<sup>f</sup> Τὰ σράθμα are properly the anchorage for ships. Chalcodon was an ancient king of Eubœa, father of Elephenor. V. II. IV. v. 464.

and in hazard, to receive blessings, or the contrary<sup>g</sup>. But it becomes one while exempt from woes to look to the dangers, and when any one shall live prosperously, at that time most narrowly to watch his life, lest he be unwarily brought to destruction.

CH. Pity him, O king<sup>h</sup>: he hath recounted the struggles of many a trouble hard to bear, so many as may no friend of mine ever happen on. But if, O king, thou hatest the bitter Atridæ, I for my part, transposing their evil to advantage for this man, would convey him thither whither he has mentioned, to his home, on board my well-equipt, swift bark, avoiding the vengeful wrath from heaven.

NE. Beware thou, lest now thou be here a sort of easy person, but when thou hast been sated with the company of his disease, then thou shew thyself no longer the same as in these words.

CH. By no means. This reproach it cannot be that thou wilt ever have in justice to rebuke me withal.

NE. Nay, but it were base, that I should shew my-

<sup>g</sup> Thus Horace, L. II. Od. 10.

Sperat infestis, metuit secundis  
Alteram sortem bene præparatum  
Pectus.

<sup>h</sup> The commentators question here, whether the Chorus are acquainted with the plans of Ulysses and dissimulation of Pyrrhus or not. Barby considers them ignorant of it all, and that the pity they wish to prove by deeds is unfeigned; which, though it accords well with Horace's rule for the management of the tragic Chorus, is not so reconcileable with the instructions previously given on the stage to Neoptolemus by Ulysses, unless we suppose the ancients to have had recourse to that disgrace of most modern plays, the "aside."

self less ready than thou art in taking seasonable trouble for the stranger. But if it seems fit, let us sail, let him hasten with speed; for the ship shall carry him, and he shall not be refused. Only may the gods take us safe from this land at least, and to whatsoever place we wish to sail from hence.

PH. O day most beloved, O man most pleasing, and ye, dear sailors, how might I become manifest to you by deeds, how much attached to you ye have made me! Let us be gone, my son, having bidden farewell with a kiss to my houseless abode within, that ye may learn of me on what I continued to live, and how stout of heart I was by nature, for I think that none else save me, having taken but a mere sight of them with his eyes, had endured all this; but I of necessity was foretaught to be resigned to miseries<sup>i</sup>.

CH. Hold, let us learn the matter; for two men, the one a mariner in thy vessel, the other a foreigner, are coming, of whom having learnt [their purpose] go ye afterwards within.

#### MERCHANT.

Son of Achilles, this, the comrade of thy voyage, who was with two others, the guardian of thy ship I desired to tell me where thou mightest chance to be, since I have fallen upon thee, not indeed supposing I should, but in a manner by chance having put in to this land. For being bound, as master of a vessel, with no large equipment, from Troy homewards to Peparethus<sup>k</sup> rich in the clustering grape, when I heard from

<sup>i</sup> Ἀγαπᾶν is used in the same sense.

<sup>k</sup> Peparethus is a small island in the Ægean sea, off the coast of Macedonia, once celebrated for its vines and olives.

the sailors that they were all the crews of thy vessels, it seemed fit to me not silently to perform my voyage, until I had made a disclosure to thee, having met with a fair requital<sup>1</sup>. Perhaps thou knowest nought of what concerns thyself, what are the new resolves of the Greeks touching thy concerns<sup>m</sup>, nor merely resolves, but deeds now acting, and no longer loitered in.

NE. Nay, the gratitude of thy friendly care, O stranger, unless I have been born a villain, shall affectionately continue; but expound all that thou hast mentioned, that I may learn what new plot of the Greeks against me thou bearest.

MER. Both the aged Phoenix and Theseus' sons<sup>n</sup> are gone in pursuit of thee with a naval squadron.

NE. With intent to carry me back by force or by persuasion?

MER. I know not, but having heard am here to tell thee.

<sup>1</sup> Commentators are much divided on this passage. Brunck condemns the scholiast for referring *προστούχοντι* to *μοι*, and alters it to *προστύχων τι*. Heath would read, *προστούχον τι, τῶν ἴσως . . .* that is, *quædam quæ mihi nota esse contigerunt, quorum tu forsân nihil nosti*. Musgrave corrects it, *προστούχοντι, τῶν ἴσως . . . visum est mihi, quum semel incidissem, non silentio prius abire, quam tibi dicerem, de quibus tu nihil fortasse nosti*. There does not, however, seem to be any good reason why *προστούχοντι* should not be referred to *μοι*, though not in the sense in which the scholiast understands it.

<sup>m</sup> *ἀμφὶ σοῦνεκα* is defended by Hermann, as a similar phrase to *τίνας δὴ χάριν ἔνεκα* in Plato, or *ἀπὸ βοῆς ἔνεκεν, ἀμφὶ σοῦ* being construed as a noun, which the peculiar construction of *ἀμφὶ* certainly countenances.

<sup>n</sup> These were Acamas and Demophoon, worthy of their father, since the last is celebrated for his desertion of Phyllis, and the former going with Diomed to demand Helen of the Trojans, seduced Laodice, the daughter of Priam. This prince is said to have founded the city of Acamantium in Phrygia, and on his return to Athens gave his name to one of its tribes.

NE. What, do then Phœnix and the partners of his voyage do this thus hastily to pleasure the Atridæ?

MER. Be sure that all this is now doing, and no longer to come.

NE. How then was not Ulysses voluntarily ready to sail for this purpose? was it any fear that withheld him?

MER. He and Tydeus' son were setting out after another warrior, when I weighed anchor.

NE. Who might this be, for whom Ulysses himself was sailing?

MER. There was indeed a man——But first tell me of this man here, who he is; and what thou sayest, speak not aloud.

NE. This before you is the illustrious Philoctetes, stranger.

MER. Now ask me no more, but with all speed sail hence, and away with thyself from this land.

PH. What says he, my son? What can be the reason that thus darkly the mariner buys and sells me in his words to thee?

NE. As yet I know not what he says, but it needs he speak openly what he will speak, to thee, and me, and these here by.

MER. O offspring of Achilles, impeach me not to the army, as disclosing what I ought not. I, doing them many a service, receive of them a fair requital, such as a poor man may.

NE. I am a foe to the Atridæ°, and this is my dearest friend, for that he detests the Atridæ: it is then thy

° See Brunck's note on the metre here, and also Œd. Tyr. 332. Œd. Col. 939. Ant. 458.

duty, at least as coming well-affected towards me, to conceal not a word of all thou hast heard before us.

MER. Look to what thou doest, my son.

NE. And long since I do consider.

MER. I will lay the blame of this on thee.

NE. Do so, but speak.

MER. I do. These two, even as thou hearest, Tydeus' son and the puissant Ulysses<sup>p</sup>, are sailing against this man, under a solemn oath that positively they will either by words persuade and bring him back, or by the power of force. And this all the Greeks heard Ulysses openly declaring: for he had more confidence than the other, that he should effect all this.

NE. But on what account are the Atridæ after so long a time so very anxious for this man, whom they have driven and condemned to exile now for a long season? What is the want that has invaded them, or what force and indignation from heaven, that avenges wicked deeds?

MER. I will inform thee of all this throughout, for haply thou has not heard it. There was a high-born seer, the son of Priam, and he was called by name Helenus<sup>q</sup>, whom he, the crafty Ulysses, that hears of

<sup>p</sup> To make his tale more plausible, the pretended merchant joins Diomed with Ulysses in this enterprise, as they were both eminent in infamy, both protected by Minerva, and usually partners to execute any scheme of treachery, such as the murder of Dolon or of Rhesus, or the theft of the Palladium.

<sup>q</sup> Other authors differ in their chronology at this period, for they state that Helenus, on the marriage of Deiphobus with Helen, retired in disgust to mount Ida, whence Ulysses carried him to the Greek camp. But Paris, as is foretold in this play to Philoctetes, was slain by the arrows of Hercules.



himself every base and insulting term, having gone out alone by night, took prisoner, and bringing him bound into the midst of the Greeks displayed him, a noble booty: who thereupon foretold to them both every other point, and that it could not be that they should ever take the citadel of Troy, unless they brought, having persuaded him by their words, this warrior here from this island whereon he is at present dwelling. And when the offspring of Laertes heard the prophet uttering these words, he instantly undertook to bring and present to the Greeks this man; he must suppose, having taken him in preference with his consent; but if he would not, against it; and not succeeding in this, he bid any one that would to cut off his head. My son, thou hast heard all; but to be quick I exhort both thee thyself, and if thou hast a care for any other.

PH. Ah me unhappy! Has he then, that utter pest, sworn that he will persuade and convey me to the Greeks? For as well shall I be persuaded when dead to rise even from Hades to light, as did his father<sup>r</sup>.

MER. Of this I know nothing; but I will go to my vessel, and may heaven aid you both as best it may.

PH. And is not this shameful, my son, that Laertes' son should ever hope by soothing words to carry me on board ship and shew me in the midst of the Greeks?

<sup>r</sup> This alludes to a well known trick of Sisyphus, who being on his death bed, charged his wife Merope to leave him unburied. She complied, and on Sisyphus' arrival in Hades he complained to Pluto of her impiety, which he requested leave to punish. This was granted, and he returned to earth under promise of revisiting hell as soon as he should have avenged himself. No sooner had he regained life, however, than he violated his oath: for which he was afterwards punished.

No; sooner would I listen to the viper, my deadliest bane, that made me thus lame of foot<sup>s</sup>. But by him can every thing be said and every thing be attempted: and now I know that he will come. But O my son, let us go, that a wide sea may part us from Ulysses' vessel. Let us begone: timely exertion, look you, when the labour is at an end hath brought sleep and repose.

NE. Well then, when the wind in our bow shall subside<sup>t</sup>, then will we sail, for now it sets against us.

PH. The season to sail is ever fair, when thou art flying from calamity.

NE. Nay, but these same winds are adverse to them.

PH. There is no wind contrary to pirates, when it is possible to thieve and rob by force.

NE. Nay, if thou think fit, let us begone, when thou hast taken from within whatsoever thou most feelest need of or desire for.

PH. Yes, there is whereof I have need<sup>u</sup>, though from no ample store.

NE. What is it, which at least is not on board my ship?

PH. I have by me a certain plant, wherewith chiefly I am continually assuaging my sore, so as thoroughly to mitigate it.

NE. But bring it out. And what else art thou desirous to take?

<sup>s</sup> "Ἀποῦν: ποῦς in casu quarto nunquam quidem habet ποῦν, at in compositis habet, ut πολυποῦν et πολύποδα." Barby.

<sup>t</sup> This is sometimes read ἀγῆ, quasi ἐαγῆ, from ἀγνυμι *frango*. See Brunck's note.

<sup>u</sup> "Δεῖ—ἄπο. Tmesis est pro ἀποδεῖ. Sunt, quibus egeam, nec multis tamen." Barby.

PH. If any one of these my arrows hath fallen beside me unheeded, that I may not leave it for any one to take.

NE. What, are these the celebrated bow and arrows, that thou art now holding?

PH. They are, for there are at least none else that I carry in my hands.

NE. Is it possible for me to take a close view of them also? and to hold them, and salute them with a kiss \* as divine?

PH. To thee at least, my son, both this and aught else of mine, that may advantage thee, shall be done.

NE. Indeed I long to do it, and thus I feel my longing: if it be allowable for me, I should wish it, but if not, let it alone.

PH. My son, thou both speakest piously, and it is allowable for thee at least, who alone hast given me to behold this light of the sun, to look on the land of CÆta, on my aged father, on my friends, who hast raised me far beyond mine enemies when sunk below them. Courage; it is given thee both to touch these arrows, and to return them to the giver; and that thou shouldst hereafter make it thy boast that thou alone of mankind

\* Προσκύσαι has not always the same signification: vid. v. 776, where it means to mitigate by worship the anger of the gods, and to which there is a parallel expression in the last verse of the second Psalm. A kiss has in all ages, however, been considered as a mark of respect. Hence Cicero: *Ibi est ex ære simulacrum ipsius Herculis, quo non facile quidquam dixerim me vidisse pulchrius—usque eo, judices, ut rictum ejus ac mentum paulò sit attritus, quod in precibus et gratulationibus non solum id venerari, verum etiam osculari solent.* Cic. in Ver. L. IV. 43. Such is the account given by travellers of the Kaaba or sacred stone at Mecca also. Vid. Virg. *Æn.* II. 490. Tibull. *El.* I. 44. Ovid. *Trist.* L. I. 44.

in guerdon of thy virtue hast handled them, seeing that it was by a kind action I myself acquired them<sup>y</sup>, displeases me not, now that I have seen and gained thee for my friend: for whoever knows how to return a kindness he has received, must be a friend above all price.

NE. Thou shouldst go within.

PH. Aye, and I will bring thee in too, for my disease longs to possess thee as my supporting aid.

CH. I have heard fully in story, yet truly I never witnessed, how that the all-powerful son of Saturn caught Ixion<sup>z</sup>, once the invader of the couch of Jove, and thereupon chained him to a whirling wheel<sup>a</sup>; but of no other do I know by hearsay, nor have I seen among mankind, doomed to a lot more hateful than this man's, who having injured no one by force or fraud<sup>b</sup>, but among the just a just man, hath been ruined thus undeservedly. This wonder possesses me, how ever, how ever, he lonely listening to the breakers dashing around, how in truth he could have supported an existence so thoroughly pitiable: where he alone<sup>c</sup> was

<sup>y</sup> Philoctetes had received the arrows in reward for his services to Hercules, and particularly the kindling of his funeral pile on Æta. Hermann supposes a line to be omitted in the Greek text here, and reads *ιδὼν καὶ λαβὼν*, construing *σε* with *ἄχθομαι*. If a colon be placed after *δοῦνα*, the passage seems capable of the version given above without an hiatus.

<sup>z</sup> Ixion's story is too well known to need repetition. Hermann reads *ἔβαλεν*, construing *δρομάδα* with *Ἰξίονα*.

<sup>a</sup> The word *ἄμπυξ*, which is supported by the authority of Eustathius, (vid. Brunck's note,) meant originally the fillet used by women to tie up their hair, vid. Hom. Il. XXII. v. 469, and after that came from its round form to signify a wheel. Musgrave, however, suggests *ἀντυγα*.

<sup>b</sup> *ἔρξας*, sc. *τι*. Herm.

<sup>c</sup> This appears better suited to comedy than tragedy, and to company with the *proximus sum egomet mihi*, or the often quoted verse, "None but

bordering on himself, unable to walk, nor was there any inhabitant of the place to whom he might wail forth his echoed groan, unwelcome neighbour<sup>d</sup>, his . . . . . painfully gnawing, blood-stained; that such might with gentle herbs assuage his most fevered blood bubbling from the wounds of his<sup>e</sup> empoisoned foot, should he light on any<sup>f</sup> so as to gather it from the fostering earth. For then when his soul-gnawing torture might relax, would he crawl like a babe without his kind nurse, now to this store now to some other, whence he could have easy relief, not gathering the sowed nutriment of holy earth, nor of other food wherewith we industrious men support ourselves: except if ever by the winged arrows of his bow striking from afar he might procure food for his hunger. Ah wretched soul! that for ten long years he was not gladdened with the beverage of the flowing wine-cup, but gazing on the stagnant water<sup>g</sup> wherever

himself can be his parallel." Hermann says *πρόσωπος* in Herodotus signifies *neighbouring*; but that Ionic form is, unless I am totally mistaken, inadmissible in the tragedians. With them *πρόσωπος*, like *ἔπουρος*, is derived from *οὖρος*, *ventus secundus*. *ἔν' αὐτὸς ἦν πρόσωπος* then will mean, *in quem locum ipse quasi secundo vento venerat*.

<sup>d</sup> *Κακογείτων* is not "a bad neighbour," but "a neighbour to evil," as Brunck has shewn in his note from analogy. Hermann unites *κακογείτονα* to *στόνον*, and for the sake both of the metre and the sense, marks an hiatus between *ἀντίτυπον* and *βαρυβρῶτα*. The omitted word he thinks *κάματον*. In the line following he leaves out *οὐδέ*.

<sup>e</sup> The scholiast interprets *ἐνθήρου θηροδέκτον*. Hermann translates it with Buttman *efferratum*, as *ἐνθηρον τρίχα*, Ag. 571, alluding to the foul appearance of the foot clotted with gore.

<sup>f</sup> Herm. *εἴ τις ἐμπέσοι*, sc. *αἱμάς*. The passage that follows is altered to suit Hermann's text.

<sup>g</sup> From these words of the Chorus Hermann infers, that the running stream mentioned in the beginning of the play was not represented on the

he chanced to know it was, ever would he add it to his food. Now, however, he shall end his life in happiness, and rise to greatness from those miseries, having met with the son of brave heroes, who in bark that walks the main, in fullness of many months, brings him to his paternal abode of the Melian nymphs, and beside the banks of Spercheius, where the brazen-shielded hero enters the assembly of all the gods<sup>h</sup>, all radiant in heavenly fire, above the mounds of Æta.

NE. Crawl out, an thou wilt. What can be the matter, that thus from no assignable reason thou art silent, and thus struck dumb art kept so?

PH. Oh! alas! alas!

NE. What is it?

PH. No harm. But proceed, my son.

NE. Is it that thou feelest pain from thy existing ailment?

PH. Not I indeed: no, I think I am just now lightened of it. O ye gods!

NE. Why thus with groans dost thou invoke the gods?

PH. That they may come as our deliverers, and placable. Oh! Oh!<sup>i</sup>

NE. What can be the matter with thee? wilt thou

scene, and that Ulysses from that very circumstance there subjoins *εἰπερ ἴσῃσι σῶν*.

<sup>h</sup> This alludes to the apotheosis of Hercules. Hermann considers the epithet merely to denote a warrior. Hesiod has described Hercules' shield.

<sup>i</sup> There is a scene not unlike this in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, where Bacchus and Xanthias contending which is the god, which the slave, and Æacus proving them by stripes, they invent some curious excuses for their cries.

not tell, but continue thus silent? Thou art clearly involved in some affliction.

PH. I am undone, my son, and shall not be able to conceal my misery from you<sup>k</sup>. Alas! it pierces, pierces me through. Unhappy! wretched me! I am undone, my son, I am gnawed<sup>l</sup>, my son. Oh! alas! alas! alas! by the gods, if thou hast ready by thee to thine hand any sword, my son, strike me on the top of my foot, mow it off as quickly as possible, spare not my life. Come, O my child!

NE. But what is this fresh thing thus suddenly risen, for which thou utterest so much of wailing and of groans for thyself?

PH. Knowest thou, son?

NE. What is it?

PH. Knowest thou, son?

<sup>k</sup> “ Philoctetes, feeling the symptoms of his distemper approaching, endeavours as much as possible to conceal his anguish, being apprehensive that his cries and groans might induce Neoptolemus, in spite of his promise, to leave him behind; he makes slight of it, therefore, till quite overpowered by continual torture, he acknowledges himself at last unable to stir. This circumstance, we may observe, is artfully thrown in by the poet, to stop the effect of Ulysses’ stratagem, which was just on the point of execution, and which, if it succeeded, must of course have put an end to the drama: this accident intervening gives a new turn to the whole, serves to introduce the remorse and repentance of Neoptolemus, gives Ulysses an opportunity of appearing, and brings about the catastrophe.” Thus far Franklin, who does not appear to have remarked the sublime moral contained in this part of the play, which shews us how often our estimate of good or evil fortune is utterly false; and is the more striking, since it at once baffles those very plans which Ulysses had endeavoured to recommend by the jesuitical doctrine of doing evil that good might follow, and asserts the right of Providence to produce good from the evil it has permitted.

<sup>l</sup> Βρῦκεν and βρύχειν, originally the same word, seem by custom to have taken different senses, the first *mandere*, the second *frendere*, Herm.

NE. What is this of thine?

PH. I know not.

NE. How knowest thou not?

PH. Woe, woe, woe<sup>m</sup>!

NE. Grievous at least is the burden of thy distemper.

PH. Aye, grievous indeed, and unspeakable: but pity me.

NE. What then shall I do?

PH. Abandon me not out of fear, for it comes on me but at long and uncertain intervals, even as it rages its fill. Alas!

NE. Miserable that thou art! Alas, too plainly miserable indeed from all manner of woes. Dost thou then wish I should hold and touch thee at all?

PH. Nay not this at least: but having taken these my weapons, even as just now thou askedst of me, until this pang of the disease that is now upon me shall subside, do thou save and guard them. For so sleep

<sup>m</sup> Unless all the commentators be mistaken, these expressions and the *ἐλελελελελε* of Æschylus are positive nonsense, and such as our barbarian Shakespeare, with all his false taste and treasons against the unities, would have thought unworthy of kings and heroes, and fit to rank only with the "Do-de-do-de-do-de" of poor Tom. Indeed it is not improbable that the comedian's satire was directed against them, since in his *Clouds*, v. 390. he uses a word nearly the same for a most ludicrous purpose. Let the critic, however, be heard: "Aptissime illa crebra repetitio literæ π palpitationem oris et maxillarum, quæ hujusmodi dolorum propria est exprimit." Hermann. "Though the spirit of the Greek drama," says Schlegel, "required a general repose, favourable to the presentation of grand masses, to the embodying of those isolated moments sculpture loves to seize, yet the Greeks were so far from neglecting the impassioned movements of the soul, that they have dedicated whole lines in their tragedies to the inarticulate expression of pain."



seizes me when in fact this evil shall come out: and before I cannot rest: but ye must let me slumber quietly. And if during this time they shall come, I charge thee by the gods neither voluntarily nor involuntarily nor by any means whatever to give up these arms to them, lest thou be the slayer at once of both thyself and me, that am thy suppliant.

NE. Be assured at least of my forethought: they shall not have been given to any but to thee and me: and with good omen reach them to me.

PH. There, take them, son, and with a kiss propitiate their envy, that they be not the source of many troubles to thee, nor as to me, and him that before me had them<sup>n</sup>.

NE. Ye gods, be this my fortune, and be mine a favourable and well-spent voyage, whithersoever heaven justly wills, and the fleet is bound.

PH. Nay then I fear lest thy prayer be ineffectual, my son; for again from the bottom trickles this my purple bubbling blood, and I look for something fresh. Woe! alas! alas again! O foot, what evil wilt thou work me! this steals upon me, draws near to me. Ah me! ah me! ye see the case: by no means fly from me. Oh! oh! stranger of Cephallenia, I would this torture might fasten on thy breast, through and through

<sup>n</sup> There seems no reason to suppose that Philoctetes alludes to anything more here than the ill fortune generally of Hercules and himself. Hercules slew his children with his arrows certainly; but Sophocles ascribes the disease of Philoctetes to the bite of a serpent. Hermann seems to be mistaken, however, with regard to the necessity for Philoctetes' having exchanged his arrows: the Indians use poisoned weapons to procure food for themselves.

it. O heavens! Agamemnon, Menelaus, how might ye in my stead for an equal length of time harbour this my malady? Ah me! O death, death, why, when thus ever day after day invoked canst thou never at any time come? My son, my noble son, having taken me up, burn me on this Lemnian<sup>o</sup> upward-curling fire, thou generous youth! I too, mark me, once thought proper to perform this for the son of Jove, in return for these arms which now thou preservest. What sayest thou, my son? what sayest thou? Why art thou silent? Where canst thou be, my child?

NE. Long since indeed I mourn, sighing over thy woes.

PH. Nay, my son, but take courage, since this pain suddenly assails me, and is soon gone, but, I conjure thee, leave me not alone.

NE. Cheer up; we will stay.

PH. And wilt thou stay?

NE. Be well assured of it.

PH. I will not, however, think I have a right to bind thee by an oath, my son.

NE. [No need hast thou] for at least it is not allowable for me to go without thee.

PH. Give me in mine the surety of thy hand.

NE. I give it thee that I will stay.

<sup>o</sup> The island of Lemnos was said to be sacred to Vulcan, probably from volcanic fires, which would be an additional reason for the desolate state of that quarter of the island which Philoctetes inhabited. Hermann restores *ἀνακαλουμένην*, "this often-invoked fire." "Montem Mosychlum, qui Galeni ævo jam diu extinctus erat, circa Alexandri tempora flammas ejicere desiisse, non improbabilibus argumentis demonstrare studuit Buttmannus in Mus. Stud. Antiq. Germanico, vol. i. p. 2." Hermann. See Homer's account of Vulcan's fall, Il. 2. and of the Loves of Mars and Venus, Od. 8.

PH. Thither now, thither with me——

NE. Whither sayest thou?

PH. Upwards——

NE. What ravest thou again, why gazest thou on the vault of air above<sup>p</sup>?

PH. Let me go, let me go!

NE. Whither shall I let thee go?

PH. Let me go at last.

NE. I cannot let thee go.

PH. Thou wilt ruin me, if thou touch me<sup>q</sup>.

NE. Now then I do leave thee to thyself, if thou art indeed any more thyself.

PH. O earth, take me to thee, dying as I am, for this evil suffers me no longer to stand upright.

NE. Sleep will, it seems, in no long time possess the man. For this his head is sunk down, see, sweat is trickling over all his body, and one black vein burst with blood<sup>r</sup>, hath forced itself open by the extremity of his foot. But, leave we him, my friends, quiet, that he may fall asleep.

CH. O sleep, in pain—in grief, O sleep, untaught, mayest thou come upon us gently-breathing, thou life-

<sup>p</sup> Κύκλος here is by some commentators understood to mean the eye, as at verse 1354. Struve understands *κατά*, and translates it thus: *quid oculis* (vel *alterutro oculo*) *sursum suspicis*? Hermann supposes Philoctetes to indicate a wish to return to his cave that he may sleep there, which permission Neoptolemus grants when it is too late.

<sup>q</sup> Neoptolemus holding Philoctetes by the hand by which he has pledged his faith, extends his other to prevent Philoctetes from withdrawing his hand, whereupon Philoctetes shrinks from the apprehension of the bow, which Neoptolemus holds, touching his foot. Herm.

<sup>r</sup> Αἰμορράγης, from the second aorist passive of the Ionic *ρήγω* instead of *ρήγνυμι*.

cheering, life-cheering king; and retain before his eyes even such a light as now is spread around<sup>s</sup>. Come, come to me a physician. My son, look where thou art about to pause, whither to move, and heed me with thy further purpose. Thou seest now; for what work tarry we? Opportunity, be sure, possessing arbitration of every thing, acquires much power in its course<sup>t</sup>.

NE. Nay, but he hears nothing; I however perceive that in vain we possess this plunder of his weapons, if without him we sail; for his is the crown, him heaven commanded us to fetch. And to vaunt unfulfilled promises with falsehood is a vile reproach<sup>u</sup>.

CH. But this, my son, let heaven look to, but with whatever thou shalt in turn reply to me, convey to me the accents of thy words gently, my son, gently; since the restless slumber of all men is in disease sharp-eyed to discern. But as far as thou canst, in secret search out for me that, even that, which thou meanest to do.

<sup>s</sup> Musgrave understands αἴγλη here to mean *levamen* or *solatium*, a forced interpretation arising from his reception of ἀντίχους, which Brunck has changed to ἀντίσχοις, and thus improved both the metre and the sense. The light of Philoctetes is now darkness.

<sup>t</sup> Or, "having respect to every thing." Such is the sentiment which the Corinthians, and after them the Mityleneans, wish to impress on the minds of the Lacedæmonians. Vid. Thuc. 1. c. 69. III. c. 13.

<sup>u</sup> Struve seems to understand this as referring to the disgrace which would accrue to Neoptolemus, if after all his falsehood he should vaunt of an uncompleted victory: his words are *quæ manca et imperfecta reliqueris, de his, mendaciis etiam adhibitis, gloriari velle, turpe est opprobrium*; and this Barby commends; but the translator is rather inclined to consider the words as betokening remorse in Neoptolemus. As translated it may mean either. The reader should observe the oracular and stately flow of the original in this passage, which seems to stand in the middle of the play, as the pivot on which turns the whole catastrophe.

Thou knowest whom I mean<sup>x</sup>; now if thou hold the same opinion with him, 'tis eminently the privilege of the shrewd, look you, to see into perplexing matters. See my son, the wind is fair, the wind is fair, and the man sightless, possessed of no defence, is lying in darkness (but his warm sleep is propitious) master of neither hand, nor foot, nor any thing. No, but thou seest his look is as of one lying in Hades<sup>y</sup>. Give orders that suit the occasion: this matter, my son, can be effected by my prudence: the toil that has no fear is the most effectual.

NE. I bid thee be silent, nor be wanting to thy thoughts, for the man moves his eye, and raises his head.

PH. O light that takest the place of sleep, and, guardianship of these strangers incredible to my hopes! Never, my son, could I have conceived that thou wouldst have the heart thus compassionately to abide my sufferings, present and assisting me. Truly the

<sup>x</sup> Hermann proposes to read here,

*οἶσθα γὰρ ὧν ἀνδῶμαι,*

*εἰ ταύταν τούτῃ γνώμαν ἴσχεις, μάλα τοι, κ. τ. λ.*

which may be thus rendered: "For to them (thou knowest of whom I speak) wise men can discover irremediable mischiefs in thy purpose, if this be thy purpose towards him who lies before us;" alluding to the misery Neoptolemus would occasion to the Atridæ and the whole Greek army. The instance Barby adduces from Catullus "*nihili est*," there being an evident hiatus and loss of several verses in both that and the following strophe.

<sup>y</sup> "He looks on thee as does one," etc. "See now if thy words be seasonable, when thou proposest to stay, having the best of opportunities for departure." Hermann;—who reads *τὸ δ' ἀλώσιμον*, and places only a comma after *πᾶσι*. This will be, "but what my judgment apprehends, my son, is this; that labour without fear is the most eligible."

Atridæ, those noble generals, did not endure thus patiently to bear them. But, for thy nature, my son, is noble, and of noble origin, thou hast accounted all this easy, though oppressed with my cries, and the noisome stench. And now, since at length there seems to be an oblivion and repose from this woe, my son, do thou thyself take me up, do thou set me, my son, upright, that when at last my weariness shall quit me, we may hasten to the ship, nor delay our voyage.

NE. Nay, I am pleased to see thee beyond my hope yet enjoying breath and sight without pain. For in thy condition of misery just now thy symptoms appeared as those of one no more. But now raise thyself, or, if it please thee rather, these men shall carry thee, for there is no unwillingness to the trouble in them, if indeed it seem fit to thee and me so to do.

PH. I approve of this<sup>2</sup>, son, and take me up, as thou purposest, but leave them alone, lest they be annoyed with the bad smell ere there be need, for the trouble on board ship in sailing in company with me is enough for them.

NE. It shall be so; but do thou both stand up and thyself hold by me.

PH. Courage, my wonted custom, look you, will set me upright.

<sup>2</sup> Αἰνῶ τὰδε, i. e. παραιοῦμαι. *Gratia est.* Idem enim valet αἰνεῖν sapius in colloquendo, quod alias Græce dicitur καλῶς ἔχει. Lat. *benigne*, ut Hor. Epist. I. vii. 62. Utuntur nimirum hac formula, si quis beneficium sibi oblatum recusat. Frequentatum hoc sensu Græcis ἐπαυνῶ, cf. Schol. ad Aristoph. Ran. v. 511. et Valken. ad Euripid. Phœniss. p. 150. Barby. The reader may choose between this and the translation as it stands, but he must observe that καὶ follows immediately.

NE. Heavens! and what next am I to do?

PH. What is it, my son? To what conclusion, I wonder, hast thou come in thy thought?

NE. I know not whither I ought to turn my perplexed words.

PH. But for what art thou at a loss? say not thus, my son.

NE. Nay, even now am I involved in this difficulty.

PH. Surely inconvenience arising from my disease has not dissuaded thee from any longer taking me on board ship?

NE. Every thing is inconvenient, when one having abandoned his own nature, does what befits him not<sup>a</sup>.

PH. Nay, but thou at least art neither doing nor saying aught unworthy of thy sire, in aiding a brave man.

NE. I shall shew myself a villain: 'tis at this I am all along aggrieved.

PH. Nay, surely not, at least in what thou doest: but at what thou sayest, I shudder.

NE. O Jove, what shall I do? shall I twice be detected a villain, both in concealing what I ought not, and uttering words the most scandalous?

PH. This man, unless I am wrong in judgment, methinks will make hence his voyage, having betrayed and abandoned me.

NE. Abandoned thee?—not I indeed: but lest I

<sup>a</sup> This observation of Neoptolemus is in unison with Achilles' celebrated declaration:—

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,  
My heart detests him as the gates of hell.

Pope's II. IX. 412.

rather convey thee to thy grief, 'tis that all the while is torturing me.

PH. What canst thou mean, my son? for I comprehend not.

NE. I will hide nothing from thee. Thou must sail to Troy, to the Greeks and the Atridæ's host.

PH. Alas! what hast thou said?

NE. Groan not, ere thou have learnt all.

PH. What must that lesson be? what canst thou purpose to do to me?

NE. First to rescue thee from this misery, and then to go and with thee sack the Trojan plains.

PH. And dost thou really think to do this?

NE. Overwhelming necessity in this commands, and be not thou angered to hear it.

PH. Ah, wretched I am undone, betrayed! What hast thou done to me, stranger? Give me quickly back my bow and arrows.

NE. Nay, it cannot be, for both justice and interest induce me to obey those in power.

PH. Thou fire<sup>b</sup>! thou utter horror! thou most detestable masterpiece of fearful villany, how hast thou used me, how deceived me! and dost thou not, wretch, blush to look on me, thy suppliant, thy beggar? Thou hast bereft me of life, having gotten my weapons. Give them back, I implore thee, I conjure thee, give them back, my son: by the gods of thy forefathers rob me

<sup>b</sup> The scholiast takes this for a vile pun on the name Pyrrhus; and Bru-moy, following him has paraphrased it, "*O rage digne de ton nom.*"<sup>i</sup> But independently of the absurdity attendant on this, it is not the name which Neoptolemus himself gives to Philoctetes in his account of his voyage, v. 241.



not of my livelihood. Ah miserable me! Nay, no longer does he even speak to me<sup>c</sup>, but thus looks behind him, as though his restoring them were hopeless. Ye harbours<sup>d</sup>, ye promontories, ye haunts of the mountain beasts, ye precipitous crags, to you I speak this, for I know none else to whom I might: I bewail to you, my wonted audience, the deeds, how cruel, that the son of Achilles hath done to me: having sworn to carry me home from hence, he is taking me to Troy; and having proffered his right hand<sup>e</sup>, he has taken and detains my bow and arrows, arms sacred to Jove-born Hercules, and wills to display them to the Greeks. As if he had captured a strong man, he carries me off by force, and knows not that he slayeth a corpse, and the shadow of a vapour, an empty phantom. For never could he have taken me at least while possessed of strength, since he had not even thus conditioned, ex-

<sup>c</sup> Num fletu ingemuit nostro? num lumina flexit?

Num lachrymas victus dedit, aut miseratus amantem est?

Æn. IV. 369.

<sup>d</sup> This is imitated from the sublime address of Prometheus in Æschylus, ὦ δῖος αἶθρη——. Lord Byron has taken his idea from one, perhaps both of these, in his Doge of Venice:—

I speak to time, and to eternity,  
Whereof I grow a portion, not to man:  
Ye elements, in which to be resolved  
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit  
Upon you.

\* “*Struve hæc vocem cum ἔχει jungendum censet, ut sensus sit, porro palam nunc tenet, dextra extensa, arcum et sagittas meas, sacras illas Herculis, Jovis filii, quæ olim erant. Admodum durè! προτιθέναι χεῖρα, id. q. supra v. 813. ἐμβάλλειν χεῖρα.*” Barby.

cept by treachery. But now I wretched have been deceived. What can I do? But give them back, and now, even yet, be thine own self<sup>f</sup>. What sayest thou? Thou art silent. Unhappy me! I am no more. O form of the rock with double front, again I return back into thee unarmed, bereft of the means of sustenance; thus forlorn in this cavern shall I wither away, striking down nor winged bird nor mountain-prowling beast with these mine arrows: but I myself, unhappy man, being dead shall furnish a banquet to those whereon I fed, and what I made my prey before will make me theirs now, and I miserable shall make atonement with death a ransom for death, at the hand of one that seemeth to know no guile. Mayest thou not yet be accursed, ere I have learnt if yet again thou wilt transfer thy opinion, but if not, an evil death be thine.

CH. What shall we do? On thee now rests both our sailing, O king, and our acceding to these his words.

NE. On me indeed a powerful pity for this man hath fallen, not now first, but long ago.

PH. My son, by the gods, pity me, and permit not mortals reproach against thyself, having cajoled me.

NE. Ah me! what shall I do? O had I never left Scyros! so grieved am I at this present matter.

PH. Thou art not wicked, but thou seemest to come with bad instructions from the wicked. But now, having given them to others, to whom it is fair, sail hence, having given me up my arms.

NE. What are we to do, my mates?

<sup>f</sup> Vid. Aristoph. Vesp. 642. *φύσιν* is understood.

UL. O most vile of men<sup>g</sup>, what doest thou? Wilt thou not return, having left these weapons to me?

PH. Ah me! what man is this? Do I indeed then hear Ulysses?

UL. Ulysses, be assured, in me at least on whom thou lookest.

PH. Alas! I am bought and sold, I am undone. It was then of course he that ensnared me, and despoiled me of my arms.

UL. 'Twas I<sup>h</sup>, be well assured, and none other: I confess all this.

PH. Restore, let go, my son, mine archer-arms.

UL. This indeed shall he never do, even though he would; but thou too must go with them, or these will convey thee by force.

PH. Me, thou vilest of the vile, and most audacious, shall these take by force?

UL. Unless thou crawl hence voluntarily.

PH. O Lemnian land, and thou blaze of all-swaying fire Vulcan-framed, is this then to be borne, that he from thy realms shall carry me off by force?

UL. Joye it is<sup>i</sup>, that thou mayest know it, Jove, the

<sup>g</sup> As Neoptolemus is in the act of giving back the arms to Philoctetes, Ulysses rushes on the stage.

<sup>h</sup> Ulysses, knowing the enmity which Philoctetes bore to him, and returning it with equal resentment, thinks his triumph incomplete unless he tells him that he did it. See Arist. Rhet. B. II. c. 3, and the Oxford translator's Note, p. 119.

<sup>i</sup> "Jovem in insulâ Lemno natum, ibi deum patrium fuisse satis notum est." Barby. Man has never altered; and when the heathen crew of Olympus could no longer protect craft or vice, the superstition of a succeeding age made itself gods of all the host of heaven. On this there are some forcible remarks in Lear: "This is the excellent foppery of the world! that,

ruler of this land, Jove who hath determined this; but I am his minister.

PH. Thou abhorrence, what lies dost thou coin to utter! Thou, alleging gods in pretence, makest those gods liars.

UL. Not so, but true. The journey, however, must be taken.

PH. I say it shall not.

UL. I say it shall. Thou must obey in this.

PH. Unhappy me! my father then clearly begat me as a slave, and not free.

UL. Not so, but on a par with the mightiest, with whom thou must capture Troy, and by violence raze it to the ground.

PH. No, never; not even were I doomed to suffer every evil, while I have this steep foundation of the island.

UL. What then dost thou purpose to do?

PH. This mine head forthwith will I bathe in blood, having leapt from a rock above on one below.

UL. Lay hold on him, whatever ye do, nor be this in his power.

PH. O hands, what sufferings are yours in the lack of your loved bowstring, entrammeled by this man! O thou that thinkest nothing sound or liberal, how hast thou stolen upon me, how hast thou hunted me

when we are sick in fortune (often the surfeit of our behaviour) we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on." Act I. Sc. 2.

down! having used as thy stalking-horse this boy unknown to me, unworthy thee, but of me most worthy, who knew nothing but to execute what had been enjoined him. Nay, even now he shews that he takes to heart the deeds whereby he erred and I suffered. But 'twas thine evil spirit ever looking forth from its lair, that well foretaught him, however by nature indisposed as by inclination, to be shrewd in wickedness. And now, wretch, thou purposest to bind and carry me from this shore, on which thou didst expose me, friendless, forlorn, homeless, among the living a corpse. Ah! mayest thou perish; and on thee have I often imprecated this, but in vain, for the gods allot me nought of pleasure. Thou livest in exultation; while I on the contrary have this to grieve me, that I miserable live consorted with many woes, scoffed at by thee and the two generals the sons of Atreus, for whom thou trucklest to this office. And yet thou bound by stratagem and compulsion<sup>k</sup> sailedst with them; while me, all-unhappy me, that with my seven<sup>l</sup> ships under my com-

<sup>k</sup> Although it was by the advice of Ulysses that Tyndarus had imposed the celebrated oath to defend Helen on her suitors, yet he himself was so unwilling to abide by that oath, that he pretended to be insane, and ploughed the sea shore, sowing it with salt. This artifice was discovered by Palamedes, who placed the infant Telemachus before the plough, and Ulysses turned it immediately from the furrow. What requital the unfortunate son of Belus got for this is told in the second book of Virgil. It is to Ulysses' feigned madness, however, that Philoctetes here alludes.

<sup>l</sup> Brunck and Erfurdt have improperly inserted a stop before *ἐπρά*, as if Philoctetes boasted in the number of his vessels, which would have been an absurdity in him on this occasion, his rival Ulysses having sailed with twelve. Herm. This is not quite convincing: Philoctetes might naturally look for more consideration as commander of a squadron, than as an adventurer who went single-handed, without meaning to institute this com-

mand was a willing voyager, they cast away unhonoured, as thou assertest, while they charge thee. And now why take ye me? Why carry me away? For what cause? Me, that am as nothing, and long since have been dead to you? How, O most hated of heaven, am I not now lame and noisome to thee? How is it possible, with me on board, to burn sacrifices to the gods? How any longer to make libations? for this was thy pretence to cast me out. The worst perdition seizę you! And it will, for that ye have injured Philoctetes, if the gods care for justice. And I am sure at least that they do care; since ye had never sailed on this expedition for such a wretch as I am, had not a heaven-sent poignancy of need for me urged you forwards. But O my father-land, and ye gods that look upon us, avenge, at least one day after a time, avenge me on all of them, if ye have any pity for me: since pitiable is my life, yet could I but see them destroyed, I should think I had escaped my disease.

CH. Stern is the stranger, and stern is this his speech that he hath uttered, Ulysses, nor at all yielding to his sorrows.

UL. Much could I say in answer to his words, would time permit; but now I am strong in this one argument. Where there is need of plans such as these, such am I; and where the decision is of just and upright characters, you could not meet with any one more pious than myself<sup>m</sup>. However my nature is to wish to prevail at least, in every point, except

parison between himself and Ulysses; and the former might be indicated by Brunck's punctuation as well as the latter.

<sup>m</sup> See note on v. 81.

against thee<sup>n</sup>; but now to thee at least I will willingly concede. Yes, let him go, nor hold him any longer; leave him to stay. We have no additional need of thee, at least while we possess these arms, since we have Teucer with us, acquainted with this science, and me, who think I could master these, and aim them aright with mine hand in no wise worse than thou<sup>o</sup>. What want we then of thee? Adieu, and pace Lemnos<sup>p</sup>: but let us begone; and haply thy prize may win me that honour which thou shouldst have had.

PH. Ah me, what shall I do, ill-fated? Shalt thou, adorned with my arms, present thyself to the Greeks?

UL. Make me no reply, not a word, since I am now going.

PH. Seed of Achilles, and shall I no longer be addressed by thy voice<sup>q</sup> either, but wilt thou thus be gone?

UL. Go thou; nor look on him, though thou art generous, that thou ruin not our fortune.

PH. And shall I now, my guests, be thus forlorn abandoned by you, and will ye not pity me?

<sup>n</sup> Construendum potius, ἔφην νικᾶν, χροῖζων, *soleo ego vincere, ubi volo.* Herm.

<sup>o</sup> In the Odyssey, however, Ulysses confesses his inferiority, though he claims praise for this science:—

Alone superior in the field of Troy  
Great Philoctetes taught the shaft to fly.

B. VIII. v. 251.

Hermann points out the modesty with which Ulysses here speaks of himself after Teucer. The change of the negative he considers to mark a doubt, and yet an affirmative; *neque hercle iis collineaturus.*

<sup>p</sup> Or this may be rendered, “stalk in Lemnos and welcome.”

<sup>q</sup> Σοῦ φωνῆς here is governed by ἀπὸ understood.

CH. This youth is our vessel's commander; whatsoever he shall say to thee, that do we also speak to thee.

NE. I shall indeed hear myself reproached by this man with being by nature over pitiful<sup>r</sup>; yet tarry, if he wish it, thus much time, until the mariners shall have got ready that which was brought ashore, and we shall have prayed to the gods<sup>s</sup>. And he meanwhile may haply adopt sentiments more to our advantage: let us two, however, hasten hence, and be ye quick in your departure, when we shall summon you.

PH. O cavity of the hollow rock, alike warm and icy-cold, how am I then, wretch that I am, doomed never hereafter to quit thee! no, e'en in death thou wilt be my shelter. O me, woe is me! O abode, wretched abode, full fraught with my sorrows, what again will ever be my daily sustenance? What hope administering to my hunger shall I hapless ever frame to myself? O that the fugitive birds<sup>t</sup> with shrill-toned

<sup>r</sup> Πλέως πλέων, whence πλείων, Attic for πλέος πλείος: in the same dialect shortly after λφω for λώονα α λώϊων, and νω for νῶι.

<sup>s</sup> Such was uniformly the Greek custom: 'Επειδὴ δὲ αἱ νῆες πλήρεις ἦσαν, καὶ ἐσέκειτο ἤδη ὅσα ἔμελλον ἀνάξισθαι, τῇ μὲν σάλπιγγι σιωπὴ ὑπεσημάνθη, εὐχὰς δὲ τὰς νομιζόμενας πρὸ τῆς ἀναγωγῆς, οὐ κατὰ ναῦν ἐκάστην, ξύμπαντες δὲ ὑπὸ κήρυκος, ἐποιοῦντο, κρατῆράς τε κεράσαντες παρ' ἅπαν τὸ στράτευμα, καὶ ἐκπώμασι χρυσοῖς τε καὶ ἀργυροῖς οἱ τε ἐπιβάται καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες σπένδοντες. Thuc. VI. 32.

<sup>t</sup> Of this passage there are many various readings. Aldus has it πτωκάδες, Gedike πλωτάδες. Brunck gives the other conjectures of the scholia. But Barby has adopted Vossius' correction, Myth. Bucfi. v. i. p. 211. who alters it to πτωάδες from the old word πτώειν, πίπτειν. Vossius, however, understands it to allude to the Harpies, and their pouncing stoop. Hermann reads ἴθι for εἴθε, which mends both the metre and the sense. With justice he remarks that the verb πτώσω could not be applied to raven-



whizzings of their wings would take me aloft in air! for I can endure no longer.

CH. Thou, even thou, mark me, hast brought it on thyself, ill-fated man: from no other and higher quarter art thou visited with this misfortune<sup>u</sup>; when at least, it being in thy power to be wise, thou hast chosen to adopt the worse fate for the better.

PH. Ah hapless, hapless I, then, and marred by trouble, who now henceforth, wretch that I am, dwelling in future with no human being here shall perish, alas! alas! no longer bringing home food, nor possessing it by means of my winged arrows and with my powerful hands: no, the unsuspected and dissembled words of a crafty mind stole upon me guilefully: but O could I but see him, the wretch that has devised all this, for as long a time doomed to my afflictions!

CH. Destiny from heaven, and no treachery of mine at least, possessed thee with all this; keep back then thy curse, thine abhorred, ill-omened curse, for others. For I too am caring for this, that thou spurn not my kindness.

PH. Ah me! me! And somewhere, seated on the shore of the hoary main, he laughs at me, wielding in his hand the support of me unhappy, which none ever carried besides. O my loved bow, from friendly hands wrested by violence, full surely, if thou hast any feelings, thou lookest with pity on me thus wretched, never

ous birds of prey, but rather to cowering timorous animals of every description.

<sup>u</sup> Hermann reads,

κούκ ἄλλοθεν,  
ἀλλ' ἐνέχει τύχα ὧδ' ἀπὸ μείζονος. sc. θεοῦ.

again hereafter to use thee, as the prize-gift from Hercules<sup>x</sup>. No, by change of masters art thou handled by an artful man, witnessing his base deceits, and the detestable and loathed villain causing to dawn crimes on crimes innumerable, all of evil that Ulysses hath plotted against me.

СН. Surely it is a man's part to call that which is useful, just; and not to vent out the envious displeasure of his tongue at one who has so called it<sup>y</sup>. He, having been appointed one out of many, by the instructions of this Ulysses, accomplished for his friends a public service.

PH. O winged prey, and tribes of fierce wild beasts<sup>z</sup>,

<sup>x</sup> Quæcunque vox hunc locum obtinuerit, designatur haud dubie Philoctetes. Ἀέθλον retinendum esse non dixerim, licet colorem ei conciliet Horatianum illud, *accedes opera agro nona Sabino . . . .* fuit quidem cum legendum putarem τὸν Ἡρακλεῖ συνάεθλον vel ὁμάεθλον. Priorem vocem habet Oppianus, *Cyneg. I. 195*. Sed ea lectio hoc habet incommodi, quod Philoctetam Herculis comitem et in laboribus adiutorem faciat, quod nescio an Veterum quisquam tradiderit. Nihil enim aliud memorant Mythologi, nisi Herculis rogam funebrem, reliquis detrectantibus, ab ipso accensum fuisse. Hyginus, *fab. 36*. Apollodorus, *Lib. II. 7*. Diod. Sic. *IV. 38*. Musgrave. He says ὥδε οὐκ ἔτι χρησόμενον, because he has by so great treachery been deprived of its use. To which words he subjoins the accusative Ἡράκλειον ἄθλον by an usage very common to the Greeks, meaning that the use of the bow had been given to him by Hercules as a reward, which may be briefly expressed: *ita me non amplius te pro præmio ab Hercule accepto usurum*. Matthiæ has given examples of this construction in his *Gr. Gr. §. 432. 3*. Herm.

<sup>y</sup> The translator had in the former edition adopted H. Stephens's opinion; but the sense which Hermann has given makes the passage so much more applicable to the wrath of Philoctetes, and the general tone of Greek morality, that he could not hesitate to adopt it. Δίκαια μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς ἰσῆς ἀνάγκης κρίνεται, δυνατὰ δὲ οἱ προὔχοντες πρᾶσσουσιν, καὶ οἱ ἀσθενεῖς συγχωροῦσιν. *Thuc. 5. 89*. See the whole conference.

<sup>z</sup> So the Lexica give it, taking the idea from the exultation expressed in

which prowling o'er the hills the place nourishes; no longer do ye by your flight draw me towards you from my abode, for I have not in my hands the former defence of my arrows any longer, wretched that I am! no, this spot freely tenanted by you, no longer a source of fear. Approach, now is it fitting that ye glut your mouths in mutual slaughter, with my livid flesh to your pleasure, for life I instantly shall quit: since from what source will come my livelihood? who is there thus fed on air, no longer, no longer master of aught that the life-bestowing earth supplies?

CH. In the gods' name, if aught thou respect a guest that is come to thee in all good will, come thou to him. But be sure, most sure, that it is for thine own sake, to evade this evil fate: for lamentable is it to support, and unschooled to bear the countless pain wherewith it consorts.

PH. Again, again hast thou hinted at my old affliction, thou best of all that have hitherto set foot on this spot, why hast thou destroyed me? What hast thou done to me?

CH. Why sayest thou this?

PH. In case thou expectest to carry me to the hateful land of Troy.

CH. I do, for this I conceive the best.

PH. Now this moment quit me.

CH. Friendly, aye friendly is this thy bidding to me, and I am well inclined to perform it. Let us go, let us go to our ship whereunto we have been appointed [to repair.]

the eyes of wild beasts when about to seize on their prey. Vid. Hom. Od. II. 610.

PH. Go not, by Jove of the curse, I implore.

CH. Be moderate.

PH. Strangers, tarry, in heaven's name.

CH. What clamourest thou?

PH. Alas! alas! fate, fate! I miserable am undone.  
O foot, foot, what shall I do with thee any longer in  
life henceforth, wretched that I am? Strangers, come  
ye back my visitors again.

CH. To do what with purpose differing from those  
before, of which thou didst before shew thyself—

PH. It is not, look you, fair cause for indignation  
that a man languishing under tempestuous pain should  
prate even out of his mind.

CH. Go now, wretched man, as we desire thee.

PH. Never, never, know this for certain, not even if  
the fiery lord of lightning come to blast me with the  
flashes of his thunderbolts<sup>a</sup>. Perish Troy, and all they  
beneath it, as many as had the heart to spurn this my  
foot's limb. But, strangers, one prayer, at least one,  
accord me.

CH. What is this thou wilt utter?

PH. Convey to me a sword, if from any place ye  
can, or an axe, or some one weapon.

CH. To do what possible work?

PH. To lop off with my hand mine whole head and

<sup>a</sup> Musgrave admits into his text the old reading, *βρονταῖς ἀνταῖς*, and in his note rejects the emendation of Valckenaër (which Brunck has followed) for *βροντὰς αὔραις*, which he defends on the authority of Euripides, as quoted by Plutarch, *βροντῆς πνεῦμ' ἀναιμον ὤλεσε*, of Virgil, *Æn. II. 649. Fulminis afflavit ventis*, and Statius *Theb. V. 586. Moti tamen aura cucurrit Fulminis*. But he adds, "Sed videndum ne *aura fulminis* sit innoxium fulminis genus, minimeque adeo huic loco conveniens: deinde ne *βρονταῖς ἀνταῖς* sit vero *fulmine*, ipsissimo fulmine." Vol. ii. p. 179.

my limbs<sup>b</sup>. On slaughter<sup>c</sup>, slaughter, is now my mind.

CH. Why should it be?

PH. To go search for my father.

CH. Whither on earth?

PH. Into Hades, for in the light at least he is no longer<sup>d</sup>. My town, my native town, how might I look on thee, wretched man as I am, I, that having quitted thy sacred waters<sup>e</sup>, went to assist the hated Greeks, and then am nothing!

CH. I indeed even now long since had been walking near my vessel, for thee, had we not perceived Ulysses walking close by, and the son of Achilles coming towards us.

UL. Wilt thou not say [*to Neoptolemus*] wherefore again thou stealest on this way, turned backwards, thus quickly and with earnestness?

NE. To atone for all the errors I have heretofore committed.

UL. Thou speakest wonders at least. But what was the error?

NE. That wherein having been persuaded by thee and the whole united host——

UL. What manner of deed hast thou done, of those that became thee not?

<sup>b</sup> This reminds us of Virgil's *Moriamur, et in media arma ruamus*: it is a figure well suited to express the eagerness of desperation. The fate designed for himself by Philoctetes, was actually that of Cleomenes, to whom, as in his latter days a bitter enemy to Athens and her liberties, the poet might possibly allude.

<sup>c</sup> Φονῆ, Schol. θανάτις, θάνατον ἐπιθυμῇ.

<sup>d</sup> For the reasons of this opinion, see v. 493.

<sup>e</sup> Spercheius.

NE. Having by base deceits and treachery entrapped a man.

UL. What man? Ah me—thou surely dost not purpose aught new?

NE. Nothing new; but to the son of Poias——

UL. What wilt thou do? How does a fear creep upon me!

NE. From whom in fact I took these weapons, back again——

UL. O Jove? what wilt thou say? Thou surely hast no thought to give them him?

NE. Yes, for I got and have them basely and not with justice.

UL. By the gods, whether now sayest thou all this in mockery?

NE. If it be mockery to speak the truth.

UL. What sayest thou, son of Achilles<sup>f</sup>? What word hast thou uttered!

NE. Wouldst thou that twice and thrice I reiterate the same words?

UL. Nay, not once even could I have wished to hear them.

NE. Be now well assured of it: thou hast heard all I have to say.

UL. There is one, there is, that shall prevent thy executing it.

NE. What sayest thou? Who is there that shall hinder me in this?

<sup>f</sup> This naturally expresses the unwillingness of Ulysses to believe what would so completely frustrate his plans. A similar scene occurs in *Othello*, where *Æmilia* receives the first account of her husband's villany.

UL. The combined people of the Greeks, and among them I.

NE. Though naturally wise, thou utterest no wisdom.

UL. And thou neither now speakest nor art about to act wisely.

NE. Nay, but if this be just, 'tis better than wisdom.

UL. And how just, to restore again these arms which by my counsels thou gottest?

NE. Having failed with a disgraceful fault, I will endeavour to recover it.

UL. And acting thus, fearest thou not the Greek army?

NE. With justice on my side I fear not thy terrors; no, nor am I persuaded by thine hand to act, mark me<sup>g</sup>.

UL. Then not with the Trojans, but with thee will we battle.

NE. Be what must be.

UL. Seest thou my right hand grasping my sword's hilt?

NE. Nay, thou shalt see me too doing the same, and no longer about to do it.

UL. However<sup>h</sup>, I will leave thee alone, but will go

<sup>g</sup> Hermann gives the latter of these lines to Ulysses, and thenceforward makes an exchange of persons to the passage, "Nay, thou shalt," etc. which he joins with that beginning "However," etc. The line ἀλλ' οὐδέ, κ. τ. λ. he translates *quod ad effectum attinet, tuæ manui non cedam*; and observes that οὐ πείθομαι for οὐκ ἐῷ admits an infinitive after it to express the action not of the person forbidding, but of the person forbidden.

<sup>h</sup> Hermann, giving the preceding line and half also to Ulysses, says, "Quod recte factum esse vel particula καίτοι, quæ est sese a consilio capto

and tell this to the assembled host, which will chastise thee.

NE. Thou hast acted temperately<sup>i</sup>, and if thus thou thinkest on all the rest, haply thou mayest keep thy foot out of troubles. But do thou, son of Poias, I mean Philoctetes, come forth, having quitted this thy rocky dwelling.

PH. What clamorous disturbance is again raised by my cavern? Why call ye me forth? desirous of what matter, strangers? Ah me<sup>k</sup>, the matter ye desire is evil. Ye surely are here to heap a heavier woe upon my woes?

NE. Courage. But hear the words I come bringing with me.

PH. I am alarmed: for before also I fared but badly from fair words, persuaded by thy advice.

NE. Is there then no place left for repentance?

revocantis, ostendere poterat.” He adds that the propriety of the two characters favours this arrangement.

<sup>i</sup> Something similar is the reproach of Brutus to Antony in Julius Cæsar:—

For you have stolen their buzzing, Antony,  
And, very wisely, threat before you sting.

And the observation of Antony just preceding it will bear comparison with v. 1264:—

In your bad strokes, Brutus, you give good words;  
Witness the hole you made in Cæsar’s heart,  
Crying, Long live! Hail, Cæsar!

The whole scene is well accordant with Ulysses’ spirit, and his guardian’s sentiments; for Minerva appears to have allowed the utmost licence of tongue, but to have been very adverse to bloody consequences. Vid. II. I.

<sup>k</sup> This is said by Philoctetes on first seeing Neoptolemus, the preceding words are spoken within his cave.



PH. Such wert thou in words, even when thou didst steal mine arrows, trusty, yet in private baneful.

NE. But fear not that I am at all such now: I would however hear from thee whether thy purpose be to persist in tarrying here, or to sail with us.

PH. Have done, speak no farther, for in vain will all that thou shalt say be uttered.

NE. Art thou thus resolved?

PH. Aye, and be sure yet more so than I express.

NE. Nay, I indeed could have wished thou hadst been induced by my words; but if I chance to say nought to purpose, I have done.

PH. Good, for thou wilt say all in vain, since never wilt thou gain my friendly thought<sup>1</sup>; thou at least that hast taken by craft and reft me of my support, and then comest and exhortest me, thou most infamous son of a father most famous. Destruction be upon ye; the Atridæ especially, then Laertes' son and thee.

NE. Curse no farther, but accept from my hand these missiles.

PH. How sayest thou? And am I not a second time deceived?

NE. No, I swear by the highest reverence of holy Jupiter.

PH. O thou that hast spoken words most friendly, if with truth thou speakest!

<sup>1</sup> Came he right now to sing a raven's note,  
Whose dismal tune bereft my vital powers,  
And thinks he that the chirping of a wren,  
By crying comfort from a hollow breast,  
Can chase away the first conceived sound?  
Hide not thy poison with such sugar'd words.

NE. The fact shall be here manifest. But put forth thy right hand, and possess thee of thine arms.

UL. But I for my part protest against this, as <sup>m</sup> the gods witness for me, in behalf of both the Atridæ and the army in common.

PH. My son, whose voice?—I surely heard not Ulysses?

UL. Be sure thou didst; and at all events thou seest him at hand, who will convey thee hence by force to the Trojan plains, whether the son of Achilles will it, or will it not.

PH. But by no means with impunity, if this arrow be sent straight <sup>n</sup>.

NE. Ah! ah! by no means. Do not, by the gods, let go thy dart.

PH. Let go, by the gods, my hand, my dearest son.

NE. I cannot let it go.

PH. Alas, why hast thou debarred me from slaying with mine arrows a foeman and detested wretch?

NE. This were honourable neither for me nor thee.

PH. Well, but be assured of thus much at least, that those chieftains of the host, those mouth-pieces of lying

<sup>m</sup> The  $\omega\varsigma$  could not here have been omitted, since then the appeal would have respected the mere prohibition, now it has respect to that prohibition's being in behalf of the common cause. Herm.

<sup>n</sup> Fenelon, in his *Telemachus*, (as Franklin remarks,) has made a variation from this account, for an obvious reason, and indeed the same which has made him elsewhere suppress some particulars of Ulysses' conduct, and give a new colouring to others; the wish to make that chief worthy of Minerva's protection. He supposes that Ulysses made signs to Pyrrhus to restore the weapons, and that Philoctetes, in his first impulse of revenge and unwillingness to owe any thing to so detested an enemy, ungratefully prepared to turn his gift to his destruction. This however is, from the character of the parties, most unnatural.

to the Argive army, are very cowards for the battle, but bold enough in words.

NE. Be it so. Thou art master of thy weapons, and thou hast no cause for resentment or complaint against me.

PH. I allow it; thou hast, my son, displayed the nature whence thou didst spring: not from Sisyphus as father, but from Achilles, who both among the living had the noblest character, and now of the dead<sup>o</sup>.

NE. I was gratified to hear thee panegyricizing both my father and myself; but what I wish to have of thee, listen. The misfortunes that are sent by the gods it is necessary for men to endure; but as many as are involved in voluntary evils<sup>p</sup>, as thou in fact art, on these it is not just for any one to bestow either pardon or pity. But thou art become savage, and both refusest to take a partner in thy councils, and if any one speaking out of good will advise thee, thou detestest him, accounting him an enemy, and that a bitter one. Yet still will I speak, and I invoke Jove the lord of oaths; know thou this also, and grave it on thy mind within. For thou art distempered with this pain by divine ordinance, having drawn near unto the guardian of Chryse, that hidden serpent, that there protecting watches o'er the uncovered fane<sup>q</sup>: and know that a

<sup>o</sup> Ulysses himself salutes Achilles as such in his interview with him in Hades. *Od.* II. 484. It is curious to observe, however, how different an effect these two compliments have on the young heir and his deceased father, which latter, in his answer, perfectly agrees with the old proverb, "A living dog is better than a dead lion."

<sup>p</sup> See Diodotus' oration in the third book of Thucydides; and Aristotle on voluntary and involuntary actions.

<sup>q</sup> From the mildness of the climate in Greece, many of the public build-

release from this thy grievous malady may never come about whilst yonder sun shall in this quarter rise, and in that in turn set again, until thou thyself come willingly to the Trojan plains, and happening on thy cure from the sons of Æsculapius that are with us<sup>r</sup>, thus mayest be alleviated in this thy disease: and shew thyself the destroyer of Pergamus with these weapons, and in union with me. But how I know that this must be so, I will tell thee. For we have a man, a prisoner from Troy, Helenus, the first of seers, who says plainly, that all this is doomed to take place: and yet more in addition to this, that Troy must of necessity be utterly taken in the present summer; or he voluntarily surrenders himself to us to slay, if in saying this he shall have falsified. Since then thou knowest this, yield to us willingly. For noble is the acquisition, that alone having been judged the bravest of Greeks, thou in the first place fall under healing hands; and then having taken Troy, that fertile mother of groans, thou gain the most transcendant renown.

PH. O hateful existence, why then detainest thou me any longer possessed of sight above, and hast not

ings were left uncovered; and it is not yet fully agreed among the learned that the Parthenon was not hypæthral. Serpents were placed constantly by the ancients to guard treasures, as was most probably that which had a public maintenance in the building behind the Parthenon, which was the public treasury. Hence perhaps Aristophanes' idea of the aiding Plutus by Æsculapius.

<sup>r</sup> Toup proposes to read Ἀσκληπιῶν, *medicorum*, which Brunck rejects, without sufficient regard to what is afterwards said by Hercules, v. 1432. Quintus Calaber states that Philoctetes was healed by Podalirius, Machaon having fallen, which Propertius contradicts, L. II. E. i. v. 59.

Tarda Philoctetæ sanavit crura Machaon.

suffered me to descend to Pluto's home? Ah me! what shall I do? How shall I disobey the advice of this man, who being my well-wisher has admonished me! But must I then yield? Then how shall I come forth into light, wretched I, having so acted? By whom accosted? How, O ye orbs<sup>s</sup> that witness all these injuries befalling me, how will ye endure through this, that I join the sons of Atreus, who have destroyed me? How, with the all-accursed son of Laertes? For it is not the sorrow of what is past and gone that gnaws my heart, but I fancy I foresee what I am doomed yet to suffer from them. For to whomsoever the judgment shall have become mother of evil, it trains up every thing else to become evil. And I for my part am astonished at thee in this; for thou oughtest neither thyself ever again to return to Troy, and keep me too from it; men at least that have insulted thee, spoiling thee of thy father's prize<sup>t</sup>. And<sup>u</sup> then thou must go to join them in battle, and forcest me to this? Nay,

<sup>s</sup> Here again, as at v. 815, Brunck differs from several of the commentators. Gedike and Camerarius understand it of his eyes, as at v. 1270, of *Œdipus Tyrannus* :—

*ἐπαισεν ἄρθρα τῶν αὐτῶν κύκλων.*

Hermann removes the comma and places it after *ταῦτα*, understanding the word *κύκλος* as Camerarius does.

<sup>t</sup> The passion of Philoctetes authorizes this abrupt anticipation of what he meant to have said last.

<sup>u</sup> Musgrave, who admits two lines here which Brunck (see his note) rejects as spurious, is obliged to attribute them to an oversight of Sophocles, a thoughtlessness with which, as Brunck observes, it is unreasonable to charge the most perfect of the ancient tragedians in this his most finished play. As Hermann inserts them, excusing rather than defending Sophocles, it may be proper to give them :

now, my son; but, as thou hast sworn to me, convey me home, and do thou thyself tarrying in Scyros leave them, villains as they are, to perish by a death as vile. And thus wilt thou reap double gratitude from me, and from thy father double; nor by abetting the wicked, wilt thou appear by nature to resemble the wicked.

NE. Thou speakest reasonably indeed: yet still I would have thee, putting faith in the gods and my words, to sail from this land with me thy friend.

PH. What, to the Trojan plains and Atreus' most hated son, with this wretched foot?

NE. To those, however, that will cure thee and thy corrupted foot of its pain, and deliver thee from thy malady.

PH. O thou that urgest fearful advice<sup>x</sup>, what canst thou mean?

NE. The honours<sup>y</sup> which I see accomplishing for me and thee.

οἱ τὸν ἄθλιον

Αἶανθ' ὄπλων σοῦ πατρὸς ὕστερον δίκη

\*Εκριναν.

Philoctetes had heard of the death of Ajax, and knowing that the arms were given to Ulysses, might be indignant that they were not bestowed on Ajax.

<sup>x</sup> Δεινὸν αἶνον αἰνέσας, *dirum consilium dans: αἰνεῖν utique nonnunquam valet suadere, hortari.* Æschyl. Choeph. v. 533. αἰνῶ δὲ κρύπτειν τάσδε συνθήκας. Idem. Supp. 187. νῦν προμηθείαν λαβεῖν Αἰνῶ, et in eadem fabula v. 1003. ὁμᾶς δ' ἐπαινῶ μὴ κατασχύνειν ἐμέ. Adde Hesiod. Op. et Di. v. 202. Musgrave.

<sup>y</sup> Brunck's assertion on this passage respecting the quantity of the penultima in καλός, as used by the Attic writers, is ably supported in his note on the Ecclesiastusæ of Aristophanes, v. 70, to which he refers: the following passages are there enumerated. Iph. Aul. 21. (anapæsti:)—

τοῦτο δὲ γ' ἔστιν τὸ καλὸν σφαλερόν.

PH. And at saying this, hast thou no shame before the gods?

NE. No, for how should one feel shame at doing service?

PH. Meanest thou this as to the Atridæ service, or to me?

NE. To thee surely as thy friend at least, and such my language proves me.

PH. How so, who at least art desirous of giving me up to mine enemies?

NE. My friend, learn not to be fierce in misfortune.

PH. Thou wilt destroy me, I know thee, by these words.

NE. Nay, not I indeed; but I say thou understandest not.

PH. I for my part know that the Atridæ have expelled me.

NE. But look, whether they will not, having cast thee out, again rescue thee.

PH. Never, with my will at least, to look on Troy.

NE. What then am I to do, if I shall be able to persuade thee on thy part by my words to nothing that I say? For most easy were it for me to desist from my advice, and thee to live, as now thou art living, without health.

Eurip. Archelaus. v. incert.—

*σὺν μυρίοις τὰ καλὰ γίγνεται πόνοις.*

Philoct. v. 1304.—

*ἀλλ' οὐτ' ἐμοὶ καλὸν τόδ' ἔστιν, οὔτε σοί.*

See also his remarks on the constant omission of prepositions by the transcribers, Not. ad Lysistrat. v. 408.

PH. Leave me to suffer all this which I needs must suffer; but what thou hast accorded me holding my right hand, to convey me homewards, this do for me, my son, and delay not, nor think any more of Troy; for enough with loud outcries hath she been wailed by me<sup>z</sup>.

NE. If thou think proper, let us be gone.

PH. O thou that hast uttered a generous speech!

NE. Set firmly now thy step.

PH. Yes, at least as far as I have strength.

NE. But how shall I escape blame from the Greeks?

PH. Give it not a thought.

NE. And what if they should desolate my country?

PH. I being by——

NE. Wilt do what to aid me?

PH. With the arrows of Hercules——

NE. How sayest thou?

PH. Will prevent them from approaching thy country.

NE. Nay, my friend, if thou doest this at least as thou sayest it, come away, having bidden this land farewell.

#### HERCULES.

Not yet at least<sup>a</sup>, ere, son of Poias, thou shalt hear our words, and say that with thy hearing thou hearest the voice of Hercules, and beholdest his aspect. But

<sup>z</sup> Hermann reads *λόγοις* for *γόοις*, which he refers to Philoctetes' impatience of any further talk on so odious a subject as Troy, and thinks it better suited to the present indignation of that warrior.

<sup>a</sup> Nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus—

Inciderit.

Hor. de Art. Po. v. 191.



for thy sake I come, having quitted my throne in heaven, both to announce to thee the will of Jove, and to forbid thee the way whereon thou art setting out. But listen thou to my words. And first will I speak to thee of my fortunes<sup>b</sup>, how many toils having laboured and gone through with I gained undying honour, as is before thee to see. To thee too, be well assured, is owing to suffer this, and from troubles like these to render thy life glorious. But having come with this warrior to the town of Troy, thou first shalt be cured of thy painful disease; and having been chosen out of the army as the first in valour, thou shalt with my arrows bereave of life Paris<sup>c</sup>, the guilty cause of all these evils from his birth; and shalt sack Troy, and send its spoils to thy halls, having taken out the noblest prize of merit from the host for thy father Poias by the vales of thy country Æta. But whatever spoils thou shalt have gotten from this present armament, memorials of my bow and arrows, convey to my funeral pyre. And this is what I advise thee, son of Achilles; for neither without him art thou strong enough to take the plain of Troy, nor he without thee. But like two lions, co-

<sup>b</sup> Such is the address of Hercules to Ulysses in Hades: Od. II. 617.

<sup>c</sup> Hermann has a learned note here to shew why *μὲν* disjunctive is twice answered by *τε* conjunctive. The two chief points of the prediction are, he says, the cure of Philoctetes and the sack of Troy: these should have been divided by *μὲν* and *δὲ*. Thus the words connected with the first *τε* would be only interposed before the true apodosis. But because after the participle there follows something in which Paris and Troy agree, the original apodosis must be changed for one between Paris and Troy: and hence a second *μὲν* after Paris would require a *δὲ* after Troy. This *δὲ* is changed to *τε*, because one and the same instrument, the bow of Hercules, performs, and thus conjoins, the two actions.

mates<sup>d</sup>, guard ye, he thee, thou him : while I will send Æsculapius<sup>e</sup> to Troy, to cure thee of thy disease. For the second time must it be captured by my arrows<sup>f</sup>. But be ye ware of this, when ye shall desolate the land, to be pious in your conduct towards the gods<sup>g</sup>, since Jove our sire accounts every thing second to that, for piety never dies with man ; live they, or die they, it perishes not.

PH. O thou that hast wafted to me thy long-desired accents, and at length hast appeared, I will not disobey thine orders.

NE. I too side with this resolve<sup>h</sup>.

HER. Now delay not a long time to act, for opportunity and this sailing breeze astern impels you.

PH. Come now, as I proceed will I call upon this land. Farewell, O thou abode that didst help to shelter me, and ye watery nymphs of the meadows, and

<sup>d</sup> This is also from Homer, Il. V.

<sup>e</sup> This does not make Helenus a false prophet, because Neoptolemus had not named the future healers of Philoctetes on Helenus' authority, but when Helenus had predicted the cure, had of himself ascribed it to the most famous physicians in the army. Buttman, however, does not answer Jacob rightly in every particular ; for the aid of Æsculapius could not be required to expel the poison of the Lernæan hydra from a foot which Sophocles gives us no reason to suppose the hydra had ever touched, and which certainly the arrows so poisoned had not.

<sup>f</sup> Alluding to the overthrow of Laomedon.

<sup>g</sup> The Scholiast says that this has reference to the conduct of Neoptolemus, who slew Priam at the foot of the altar. In confirmation of Hercules' assertion that the gods respect piety towards them, see the debate of Jupiter with the other deities, as to whether he should control the destinies and rescue Hector. Il. XXII. The retributive vengeance which, according to Pindar, slew Neoptolemus at the altar, is worthy of remark.

<sup>h</sup> τίσυμαι, int. ψῆφον, by a common anachronism.

thou manly roar of Ocean dashing onwards, where often within my cavern have I been wetted on my head in the stroke of the south wind, while many a groan in echo to my voice hath the Hermæan hill<sup>i</sup> sent onwards to me tempest-tost. But now, ye fountains, and thou, pure Lycian<sup>k</sup> stream, I quit you, even now I quit you, having never before reached this hope. Farewell, thou sea-girt plain of Lemnos, and waft me safely with fair voyage thither, whither mighty Fate conveys me, and the judgment of my friends, and the all-taming deity<sup>l</sup>, that hath brought this to pass.

CH. Go we now all in a body, having offered our vows to the ocean nymphs, that they come the protectors of our return<sup>m</sup>.

<sup>i</sup> The Hermæan hill is mentioned by Æschylus, Agam. 291.

<sup>k</sup> Brunck, in his supplementary notes, reads, on the authority of the Scholiast, Λυκίον. Ἔστι δὲ ἡ οὕτω καλουμένη κρήνη ἐν Δήμνῳ, Λυκίου Ἀπόλλωνος, ἥ, οἷον ἐν ἐρημίᾳ, ὑπὸ λύκων πινόμενον. Musgrave prefers γλύκιμον.

<sup>l</sup> Δαίμων hic dictum, ut sæpissime, de necessitate fati, quæ dei cuiuspiam voluntate constituta est, eaque re differt a cæca necessitate fatorum, cuius præses est Μοῖρα. Herm.

<sup>m</sup> Brunck's note on the use of σωτηρίας with Νύμφαις is worthy of remark.

THE END.







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